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ABSTRACT

Structural conditions and normative expectations of university life that provide barriers and opportunities to re-entry women as they request admission, enter, and undertake graduate and undergraduate studies in a private, midwestern university were examined. Interviews were conducted with administrators, staff, and professors to elicit their views on the situation of the re-entry woman. Based on the perspective of the staff and administration, the process of recruitment and provision of support services are described. The range of understandings among academics about the responsibility of the university to such special groups as minorities, women, re-entry women, the continuing education student, and the part-time student is documented. Additional considerations are views on the best and brightest students (of any category), general normative and institutional structure (the patterns of deference and demeanor), the professors' desires, and speculations about how this institution would have to change to adapt to a larger number of re-entry students than those currently accepted. Selected comments of respondents are included. (SW)

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WELCOME AND NEGLECT:

THE AMBIGUOUS RECEPTION OF RE-ENTRY WOMEN

AT A PRIVATE, ELITE UNIVERSITY

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November 1979

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WELCOME AND NEGLECT: THE AMBIGUOUS RECEPTION OF RE-ENTRY WOMEN AT A PRIVATE ELITE UNIVERSITY

Introduction

This paper discusses some of the structural conditions and normative expectations of University life -- as reflected in the views of administrators, staff, and professors -- which provide the barriers and opportunities re-entry women will find as they request admission, enter, and proceed through graduate and undergraduate training in a private, midwestern university.

The Distinctive Ethos of a Traditional, Private Elite University

Burton Clark (1970) has remarked upon the "distinctive culture" of particular colleges and universities, and he noted that elite schools share some common elements as well. These elements distinguish such institutions from other types of higher education in a number of ways, but for the purpose of this discussion the important dimensions are related to the type of student body, the focus of instruction, the relative emphasis on research and graduate programs, and a self-conscious recruitment and selection process.

The Ivy League colleges and universities have set a pattern which has become the general model for elite and aspiring elite schools. These schools have traditionally focused on the education of an age-graded cohort of students who enter at 18 and graduate at 22. The students are placed together in both educational and residential settings to absorb college life. The institution provides both recreation and intellectual stimulation through non-academic activities presented on the campus. And the institution provides a variety of support services such as health care and counseling, book stores and eating facilities, concerts and lectures -- to cover any needs that arise in the course of living on campus. The Ivy League pattern also sets the focus of attention for the liberal arts college -- either as an independent entity or as the largest undergraduate college of a university. Education is expected to be wide-ranging -- through the arts and humanities, and the social and natural sciences. Students are expected to appreciate this range and sample as widely as possible so as to become well-rounded, informed cultural citizens. The ideal students are those who take the most advantage of this array. The best students from this group are seen as imaginative, creative, independent thinkers. They will continue after the B.A. in the highly acclaimed research and graduate programs that characterize the elite universities.

Recruitment and Selection of the "Best Candidates"

The recruitment and selection of as many as possible of the "best" candidates for the limited number of places available is the concern of the admissions staff and the alumni who aid them. The major schools compete with one another in today's increasingly tight market for a share of these candidates. The decreasing birthrate, rising alienation

APR 2 3 1980

of youth, and rising costs of education all combine to decrease the number of applicants. Recruiters for elite schools are aided in this competition by two factors: the aura of distinction surrounding a particular institution (its traditions, its reputation for eminence in a particular field, its well-known professors or departments, its general reputation in encouraging student growth through some mix of formal and informal activities), and the magical worth attributed to the diploma (the "open sesame" the name of the school is expected to provide graduates knocking on the doors of prospective employers, the expectations of success in business or social life through the access and connections acquired in the four years of college and afterwards, by virtue of alumni status). Each school, then, points to its successful graduates and the attractions of its ongoing programs to demonstrate how worthwhile its own diploma will be, despite the rising cost of education. And every effort is made to "protect" the image, to maintain the value of that diploma, by providing the best of traditional education and selecting the "cream" of the students within traditional understandings of the best and brightest.

But times have changed, and the revolts of the sixties raised many questions about how the "cream" is selected and what it is or ought to be. Most particularly, the demand by blacks for more educational opportunity, including entrance to elite universities, raised questions about the responsibility of these institutions to a wider population than traditional recruitment practices would include. These demands raised questions about the previous policies and forced consideration of the benefits accruing, even within traditional understandings of a liberal arts college, of a more heterogeneous population.

In the seventies, the women's movement provided opportunity to re-examine educational practices regarding women. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 required the demonstration of egalitarianism in entrance requirements, scholarship awards, and other educational opportunities for men and women. While Title IX provisions are still not widely understood, agreed upon, or enforced, the sections concerning the management of athletics have meant more opportunities for women in sports (Sandler and Dunkel, 1974, revised November 1975). In consequence, athletic scholarships for women recruit a new segment of the student world into elite universities.

For both minorities and women athletes, a new, aggressive recruitment policy was required. Otherwise, the pattern of recruiting from acceptable and "elite" high schools, combined with the pattern of encouraging alumni scouts to search out potential students, would reproduce the old demographic profile favoring the relatively well-to-do male children of the dominant white Anglo-Saxon group. This pattern, without specific counter-efforts, continues and flourishes through a combination of inertia and effort: I.e., the potential candidates are all recruited from similar sources, and if they are satisfied they become recruiters and sponsors of friends and relations to whom the alma mater is enthusiastically recommended.

Now that the college-age population is shrinking, even elite universities are having to consider additional ways to find desirable

candidates to fill classes and ensure economic viability. And, in some universities, consideration of the re-entry woman as suitable material at both the undergraduate and graduate level has begun. However, while each revision of the notion of "best and brightest" to include blacks, other minorities, women (at formerly all-male schools or predominantly male schools with strict quotas for female students), women athletes, has restructured some ideas about the function of the university, it has not questioned the basic principles of the undergraduate college: operating an educational "plant" that services and houses a resident student population of 18- to 22-year-olds. In the past, except for the recipients of the G.I. Bill, such anomalies as the older man or woman undergraduate were encouraged to attend less elite schools (where part-time arrangements for commuter and working students were institutionalized). In some universities, as the one reported on here, upper age restrictions for both graduate and undergraduate applications simply made candidacy for adults impossible. Today, both the growing egalitarian notions about women's rights and the rights of older people, combined with the shrinking population of traditional students may encourage some readjustment. If it does, our notions of the concept of what the best and brightest students look like and how to choose them will undergo further revision. Even substantive changes in such fundamentals as our standards of excellence are likely to occur.

In the following report, we consider how one private, elite university has responded to the vanguard of a potential stream of older, re-entry women students: those women who have persevered despite lack of special policy governing their admission and passage through the educational system; but they are prepared to take advantage of the new prohibition against age or sex discrimination in admissions. We consider the variations of belief and philosophy expressed by both institutional observers and participants on what policies can or should evolve in the future.

First, we explain the study design. Next, from the perspective of staff and administration, we describe the process of recruitment and provision of support services as understood by staff and administrators. Then we describe the range of understandings among academics about the responsibility of the university to such special groups as minorities, women, re-entry women, the continuing education student, the part-time student. We turn to the picture of the best and brightest students (of whatever category) and conclude this section with a discussion of the general normative and institutional structure (the patterns of deference and demeanor) these professors desire. We conclude the report with some speculations about how this institution would have to change to adapt to a larger number of re-entry students than those currently accepted.

Study Design

This research was designed as part of a pilot study to examine barriers to equity in education for re-entry women. Key figures in their education are the gatekeepers (admissions, financial aid officers) and the managers (counselors, deans, advisors) who maintain the support services. Perhaps the most important figures -- representatives and upholders of educational values -- are the professors. Accordingly, 41

respondents chosen from among administrators, staff, and faculty were interviewed. The principle of selection was: 1) key position in any university service or discipline providing some contact point for re-entry women; 2) favorable or unfavorable report on helpfulness to a respondent from our sample of undergraduate and graduate re-entry women (see Daniels, Benjamin and Levy, 1979).

Interviews lasting twenty minutes to an hour and one-half were conducted with 21 faculty members (from eleven disciplines in the College of Arts and Sciences and from two schools outside that college) and 20 administrators at various levels of policy making and its implementation. (Three in this number were both administrators and professors and so were interviewed in both categories.)

The focused interview method was used. For professors, topics included education and work background; views on student deportment, commitment, ability; views of part-time attendance and continuing education programs, the role and responsibility of the university to minorities, women and returning women, the ratio of men to women in respondents' classes and in their department, graduate student recruitment selection and performance in their department. The staff and administrators were asked about how judgments were made in admission, financial aid, and in the distribution of other support services (as counseling and placement, housing, health care).

The sample was quite selective; no principles of randomization were used. Accordingly, no claim for representativeness is offered. The selection method produced a group of eleven males and nine females in the staff-administrator group (one black male and one black female are included in this number); and nineteen males and two females in the professor group (including one black male). The 41 respondents present an interesting variety of ideological positions. And it is this range we have used in developing the discussion presented here. Their positions have been organized into an analytic discussion of the dominant views, showing how they are developed and supported. The analysis picks out major topics for examination, showing the themes that arise within each topic. The major topics were suggested by the questions asked of respondents (see Appendix for the focussed interview schedule). But the themes within topics appeared through content analysis of responses. The issues presented for discussion, then, were inductively developed, partly from direct responses to questions and partly from additional themes suggested by informants as they considered the issues presented to them. Further study of the categories and themes discerned through this study can tell us the proportion of adherents to each position one may find in elite university settings. This study only tells us what these 41 respondents chose to tell a colleague about their views.

As expected since the interviewer was a colleague, response rate was high; only one professor declined to be interviewed (from the student negative response category). Only time and other limitations on resources for this pilot study prevented the collection of a much larger sample. All participants expressed interest in the study and made every effort to accommodate appointments. Interviewer bias did not seem seriously to limit the extent and variety of responses -- though some ideologically

"correct" answers could be expected and certainly appeared. But it seems reasonable to assume that knowledge of the interviewer's position as a spokesperson for women and some effort to accommodate to the position such a person might be expected to take had some effect on responses. All interviews were collected in the three-month period between February and April, 1979.

I. Views from the Gatekeepers and Managers

Mechanisms for Recruiting the Best Students

Although we asked all administrators about how judgments on admissions were made, admissions and financial aid offices found this question particularly relevant to their work. Their comments and the comments by deans and counselors throughout this first section reflect the problems of selecting and then maintaining an undergraduate population.

While elite schools develop an ethos and a reputation of their own that independently attracts some applicants, most schools develop recruiting practices to assure a large number of desirable candidates for admission each year. Admissions work is divided into specialties: prep schools, athletics, transfer students, engineering and technology students, and now, given the changing times, minorities and women's athletics. Each specialist is responsible for active recruitment, including travel to other institutions and regions to present the attractions of the school "package."

The minorities recruitment program at this university is considered quite successful; over the past fifteen years, the school has changed from almost none (less than one percent) to 14% minority students in the undergraduate population. In the words of one of the officers developing the program, this is how it was accomplished.

> When I became a full-time employee, there was a total of 25 blacks in the institution and most of them were athletes. I suggested we should use some foundation [support] to determine . . . what . . . other students than white Anglo-Saxon Protestants there were who would come and who could do the work. So I submitted a grant to the X Foundation. I had visited 25 high schools in the inner city in the summer of 1965. They [likely applicants] were there and interested but to develop credibility, I had to guarantee the admission of a certain number of . . . students as well as financial aid. I picked 17 inner-city schools and guaranteed admission for two students each. Students had to write an essay and come to campus for the interview and show a certain amount of persistence. We ran a backdoor financial aid operation . . . with the approval of the administration because we thought we needed a separate admissions process to monitor . . . so that it wouldn't get lost as programs can do. . . . We brought in 37 and another 17 so we had 54 in the first class. The Higher Education Act passed in 1965 . . . by 1968 it began to grow and funds were available. And the

> institution became increasingly more responsive. The black demands probably accelerated the process. In '66 we had 54 students; in '67 we had 55; in '68 [we had] 71, and we had already 115 committed to enter in the fall of '69. In '70 we jumped to 146 and have averaged 170 a year [for] blacks since then [from the local, inner-city schools]. We are changing our relations with secondary schools generally and have begun serving [high schools with varied ethnic populations in the neighboring areas]. And we have been making an effort in the Hispanic community; we've created a program to identify Appalachian whites.

In this effort, the gatekeepers show their appreciation of the number who make a "critical mass."

> We need enough to support one another. . . . For blacks, we have 700 on campus. If we fall below 300 we are hard pressed to have a critical mass. It depends on the size of the school. For small schools of 1,200, 100 blacks is critical. If they get less, the number will fall to five.

No such systematic effort has been seen as necessary for women; except for some past inequities related to the greater number of housing units available for men than for women, this university (except for some of the professional schools) has a long history of relatively equal numbers in co-education. And so, in response to Title IX regulations, the school has been required to make only minimal adjustments. As one informant remarked:

> It does not require more than business as usual in our office. . . . I am now looking at credentials for lady jocks as well as their male counterparts. But it is not much of a problem.

Another special concern is the coordination of alumni activities around the country: Alums visit high schools praising their alma mater and looking for suitable candidates to encourage. These schools are selected by the University from "likely" prospects -- schools with previous, successful candidates for admission and schools with many "advanced placement" (college ready) courses. Some of the categories of recruitment overlap, and so flexibility is required. Transfer students, for example, may be minorities gaining confidence in their ability and working their way into the more elite educational institutions through less expensive and more accessible community colleges. Transfer students may also be older returning women doing the same thing. Now that a small group of returning women have entered and successfully completed their education, a larger group may be acceptable and an effort may be made to accept enough students to make up a "critical mass." To encourage this larger group to apply, this university may expand its notion of how admissions specialties should be organized to include someone who is familiar with the range of problems and interests older women have in gaining an education. Such a person would also need special experience and sensitivity in evaluating the folder -- and the character -- of the re-entry woman applicant, for her profile will be

quite different from that of the population normally reviewed. The folder will need revision so that application forms can be filled out appropriately. As one sympathetic officer put it:

> We have an application that does not apply to the returning students. They are asked to go back and get their high school transcripts and to have high school references. I want a new application or a new set of credentials that they submit. [One re-entry woman] had to write back to [her original college] to get a professor's recommendation. The two remembered best -- one is at another university, and the other, they didn't know where he was.

Older re-entry women applicants -- even with creditable paid work histories -- are also at a disadvantage when compared to re-entry men. As one gatekeeper put it:

> A man retired from the Army in his early forties and wants to go [to this University] . . . and it wasn't quite the hassle to get him in that it was to get the women. His twenty years in the Army is easier to evaluate than the women's work -- even [a woman applicant holding a prestigious and responsible job in advertising].

And so it takes some time, effort, patient re-education to show gatekeepers that a woman "dropping out" of her career is no less legitimate an applicant than a man completing military service. In order to assess such women, new systems of evaluation have to be developed, accepted, and understood by gatekeepers. As part of this new system, the interviews with prospective applicants will have to change.

> Normally when you talk to prospective students they can make an appointment for a half-hour interview. This is an evaluation, not in regard to the records, but about the possibility for success. . . . For older students, this is an information session, or it should be, with no evaluation. The word evaluation is a threat.

It is not yet clear, however, how such a population will be sought out and encouraged to apply. These older students are not clustered in high schools, nor are they likely to be found in the lists of those having taken the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT) examinations. This type of test taking is explained and encouraged in high schools where exam takers learn that they may place their name on "search lists" in hopes that high scores in math or language skills will attract the attention of university and college recruiters. Such lists are commonly purchased by recruiters and mailings are sent to potential candidates to learn of their interest in the school making inquiry. Finding minority students in high schools or through the examination lists is relatively easy. In this university, the lists played a significant part in changing the student body racial composition.

> The primary way that [an admissions officer] finds candidates is the college search service . . . run by the college entrance board. You design the parameters of what you are interested in. Say, for example, scoring on PSAT's in the top ten percent of the high school. This can be run through the computer and they will sell you, by name and address, those who fit your criteria. This list enabled [the admissions officer] to turn around admissions on blacks.

But re-entry women are not clustered in these ways and would have to be approached through community organizations and local advertisement. Currently, only the hardiest and most determined applicants have made their way into this elite school; none have been recruited or solicited to return. And those who wish to make the effort are required to pay heavy fees before they are given an evaluation of any prior work they have completed.

> We don't evaluate their transcripts until after they are admitted and have agreed to come. They must pay $200.00 first as a down payment on the tuition and then we will tell you what level you'll come in at.

In these circumstances, women may fear they are being treated to sharp business practices -- or else that they are being politely "cooled out." In consequence of all these difficulties, re-entry women are a very small number of the application folders that are sifted through in the screening process.

Years of processing student application folders creates a momentum of its own: What seemed to work in past years to select a successful student body becomes fixed in custom and routine in selecting candidates again this year. Staff and administration involved in this process review six thousand student folders each year -- and in peak periods they will be deluged with applications to review. Under these circumstances, they need quickly discernible indicators to help in the first screening. The ideal candidate, obviously, has "an excellent academic profile": good grades, high test scores, some record of achievement in special interests, scholarly or extra-curricular.

To date, the overall problem for screeners at early stages of recruitment is how to collect a well-rounded cohort of one age group to add to the student body. Traditional expectations of what "well-rounded" means are, as noted, reflected in aggressive recruiting practices. And again, in the trial selection, judgments about the distribution by region, special skills and interests in music, athletics, math and engineering, proportion of minorities to whites -- all may temper judgments about the standard excellent academic profile. While standards for excellent grades and well-rounded personalities may be maintained, some leeway may be required to assure enough music students to fill the various university orchestras, not too many chemistry and science majors to overfill the labs. And so it is important to understand that standards are never absolute; emphasis is placed on molding a student body by providing the right "mix" at the start. As one admissions officer explained it:

> If someone wants to enter pre-med or the hard sciences, they will have to demonstrate strength. If it is foreign languages or something in the humanities or the school of speech, that is looked on more favorably. We don't need any more pre-meds around here.

Problems of selection are compounded by the chance ebb and flow of the quality of folders examined. And the senior admissions officer may have to make final judgments where competition arises among individual folders. If, for example, folders from a group of high school valedictorians come through together, the records of succeeding applicants with less brilliant grades may seem less worthy. But if these latter applicants were re-examined later, in a group with persons of similar ability, the judgment on them might be more favorable.

Whatever the problems, the major principles of search and selection assume a range of attributes found in the 18-22-year-old cohort. And those principles depend upon finding people with a traditional background. As one admissions officer said:

> We are not doing too much to give these people a chance [who have] a non-traditional background: say, two or three different high schools and junior colleges, and courses that are not transferable for credit. That is not a clean background from an admissions perspective. It is easier to evaluate the credentials and applications of the 19-21-year-olds. We don't know how to judge the quality of work done 20 years ago. It is difficult to judge how older people do on standardized tests. The student interest [commitment] is hard to evaluate.

An additional ground for hesitation in evaluating new kinds of applicants without conventional track records is an understandable reluctance to encourage candidates who then fail. As one informant put it:

> Though there is a sincere desire to bring in someone with a reasonable chance, of course we don't want to hurt somebody -- build up their expectations and then have them unable to succeed.

And another gatekeeper saw his responsibility this way:

> I tend to feel overprotective and don't wish to mess up a kid's life through overzealousness [to push a candidate for admission beyond what that person might be able to achieve].

Part of the problem of assembling a new group of applicants for admission involves financial assistance to those who cannot afford elite school tuition and expenses. (As of 1979, at the school studied, tuition and living expanses averaged between seven and eight thousand dollars a year.) Scholarships are parcelled out to those eligible; another portion of the student body apply for financial aid. Again,

as with entrance applications, there are many folders to process. This university reviews two thousand requests for financial aid each year from undergraduates.

While no pattern of overt discrimination against women appears, the continued process of gender-stereotyped expectations interacting with self-selection, means that male-dominated fields may corner the market on aid. As one officer explained it:

> It's interesting to see how the proportions of men and women on aid are affected by the proportions going to a particular school. There are lots of women in speech and hardly any in engineering. Engineering students are on aid and so there are more men on aid than in speech where middle-class women [require] less.

Re-entry women fit the pattern of women in general -- clustering in education, speech, arts and humanities, social science. But they often need financial aid. Their problem is compounded by the notion of family responsibility for a child's education. By analogy, a husband has the same responsibility for a wife's education. And so a wife's financial situation is defined by her husband just as a child's financial situation is defined by parents. Here is how one officer described university policy:

> We will have problems on the issue where a husband or a woman herself doesn't want to spend for her education. Like the father who won't pay for his kid's education. That we won't buy. We have kept out of allocating money for special groups or problems. A parent who earns $75,000 and says 'I'll pay your way to go to [the State university] only,' we will not respond to that. And divorced families . . . we insist that if the father claims the student as a tax deduction, he is responsible for the student's tuition. So we lose such students.

A young student may claim independence from family, after living on his or her own for a stated number of years. But a wife cannot claim such independence from a husband with whom she is living. While adjustments may be made to allow for costs of educating children, the use of family discretionary funds is expected to go for education. As one administrator described it:

> There are adjustments where inflation has hit house values. And adjustments for kids in parochial or private schools. [But for wives of affluent professionals], we'll have real problems there. Discretionary money ought to be used for education. The philosophy is different between the family with dependent students (where half of family discretionary funds are expected to go for education) and independent students (all of their discretionary funds should be used for education). But is it really justifiable for a wife [i.e. to treat her as an independent student]? To make it easier for older women [to receive financial aid when their husbands refuse to help] that policy would have to be reviewed.

The problems of re-entry women at an elite university are compounded if they wish to attend part-time; for aid sources are geared to the full-time student.

> Our policy, financial-aid-wise, is not supportive. [Although] outside programs are supportive of part-time study: State Basic Grants are portable throughout the country and you can get a one-half time award.

The principle of part-time work goes against the assumption that full-time immersion is necessary. The major guidance and counseling at an elite university is beamed to the youthful cohort for whom this assumption probably holds true.

> For the 18- to 22-year-old who's got a decent academic ability, probably it is not a good idea to go to school part-time. . . . If there isn't enough enthusiasm to do it full-time, and there are plenty of financial options, the student needs to get away for a while: do something else -- probably hard work for a while; maybe the Armed Forces. Because I don't think they are ready intellectually.

And young students have to be protected from the distractions of the outside world. They should be full-time in the University environment as well as full-time students.

> Younger students should be here full-time to minimize any distraction [from] study and should become part of the community. I steer freshmen away from single rooms, the option of not picking up the board contract.
>
> Students who talk about commuting, we say forget it. We get them to the realization that they need to be away from home. They are not going to be able to study [on the bus or train].

Such a view supports the value of enculturation as much as the value of study. It presupposes the notion of some "special" quality to this education which can only be available to the rich or gifted scholarship student. The blue-collar student who needs to live at home or work part-time is not easily incorporated into this system. Part-time study, then, is a concept tagged with a lot of ideas about unacceptability in the special privilege system of the private, elite school.

But not all gatekeepers believe that part-time attendance is a poor idea; however, the availability of this option is seen as beyond their sphere of decision.

> Let's separate my personal views from my official position. I think [part-time study] is a neat idea. If a person wants to do that and has some solid reason, what's wrong with it? . . . Now do you want the school point of view? The attitude is discriminatory [against part-timers] because they will occupy space for some other kinds of students. But there is

> a difference of opinion. . . . The Engineering College is open because they see the necessity for part-time students. The Liberal Arts College sort of waffled on the part-time issue; it depends which deans you are talking to. But certain areas in science -- chemistry and biology -- are impacted. The number of chairs is sacred and the number to occupy very predictable. [Fine Arts] has its problems because of size and popularity. [And other professional schools] would take anybody and they should. Important things are going on over there. [Still another professional school] only wants folks who enter as freshmen. They don't want casual observers from other areas because they want to teach [professionals to practice their profession]. So far they have the authority to make the decisions [on who may enter] so they do. In their defense, given classroom responsibilities [for detailed supervision] it is understandable that they don't want extra folks.

Thus admissions officers do not question the contingencies of entrance, set by requirements and traditions of teaching practices in various departments and professional schools. These administrators do not see their responsibility as including the questioning or restructuring of the limits on what educational aspirations can reasonably be met on a part-time basis in schools like this elite university.

Finally, gatekeepers and managers anticipate resistance to the part-time student from faculty, and as we shall see in the next section, they are not far off the mark.

> I don't think our environment, particularly on the main campus, is conducive to part-time student status. Our faculty tend to fall into two categories. One group is particularly interested in teaching undergraduates and the undergraduate experience. The other part of the faculty is interested in research and graduate students, not quite as adamant on full-time, but darn near. They want full-value research assistants.

The part-time student is also at a disadvantage at schools like this one, where term pricing (one cost whether taking one course or four) is the developing trend. Tuition costs are already high; without unit pricing, re-entry students have no positive incentive to try a few courses to see if the work is manageable.

> Our current pricing policy does not encourage part-time. And the current pricing is one course for $600; for two courses $1100 or $1200. [And] for full-time (3 or 4 courses) it is $1,675. But term pricing is moving in the other direction.

Implicit in these policies is the notion that the elite university can afford to be very selective. Those who cannot afford it or who do not fulfill traditional expectations nor fit institutional screening and processing should go elsewhere. If the re-entry student cannot survive, she will be out of luck. One informant sums up this notion:

> I don't think we've ever had a policy [to help re-entry students] at the undergraduate level. I don't think we have had much of an outreach program either. To some extent, university policies reflect the times. There was not a lot of interest expressed by older students in the '60s, though they are increasingly part of a movement now. And I think we have not responded aggressively thus far because we don't have to. We are very comfortable with the [traditional 18-year-old] student coming to the University.

The same problems and policies appear in the management of graduate students who wish to go to school part-time. The seriousness, commitment, and ability of students to progress in regular stages through the educational system are all seen as requiring full-time endeavor. And only full-time students will receive the rewards of university subsidy.

> University fellowships and scholarships are for full-time students only. And I think that's fair. I see too many who are working part-time and working [at a job]. And the whole point of the fellowship or the scholarship is so that a student can advance to the next level of graduate study [without interruption from other commitments].

The Spirit of Recruiting

The mechanisms for recruiting students cannot be fully understood without examining the spirit of recruitment, that is, the effort to determine why a student wants to come to this university and how that reason may be related to his or her chances for success. As in every people-processing institution (McKinlay, 1975), officials develop notions about what good risks look like. These notions are typifications (Sudnow, 1965) or categories developed from experience and observation to explain and justify, to oneself and others, the process of weeding out and selecting.

Those who process students look for some special interest to indicate commitment:

> I look for people that have done something, that have found something that excited them and did it well -- an activity in school, a paper they wrote, the way they address the problem of writing the essay for application, some community event. Not shy and withdrawn or unable to deal with demands.

This commitment is also indicated by determination and independence.

> A strong self-concept, an interest in scholarship, a willingness to persist. Those who have the strongest self-concept have excelled at something. They are highly motivated to continue, to excel. They may have received most of their kudos outside the classroom; but they are reward oriented. They are reasonably well-accepted but not dependent on peers.

Such an appropriately committed candidate has learned how to express herself forcefully so as to convince the gatekeeper she is determined to succeed.

The problem of avoiding the dilettante stereotype and acquiring the classification of "serious" student is compounded when women are unaware of the appropriate way to present themselves as committed to education. From their perspective as matrons, housewives, middle-class women active in volunteer worlds, they have learned a vocabulary of acceptable "accounts" to offer in explanation of their motives. And they do not realize how this explanation for their desire to return to school will conflict with what gatekeepers expect to hear. In the women's language, an acceptable account for motivation is to say something interests her and she would like to know more about it. This presentation is a "polite" account to offer strangers. And it is also an acceptable or understandable motivation to offer bewildered friends and neighbors. As one re-entry woman who is now a gatekeeper explained:

> When we moved back to this area it was a new setting, a new type of neighbors and friends. I found that what I was doing was a curiosity. Women asked me was I going to school just to fill up the time?

Such questions suggest or evoke a dilettantish response. A polite, evasive answer to a puzzled neighbor might well be one that minimizes a sense of commitment and stresses a general "interest" instead. But the type of explanation women learn to offer friends and neighbors clashes with expectations of appropriate accounts held by admissions officers. The gatekeepers, not attuned to this presentation of interest from their experience with the usual age-graded cohort, are suspicious of this account. As one administrator explained it:

> What hurts women is their appearance of dilettantism, their attitude of saying that something is most interesting. They don't seem serious.

The problem of presentation is further compounded by the fact that women are often unsure and hesitant about their abilities, what reception they ought to expect, when they confront gatekeepers. And so they may create the wrong impression with officials who are looking for confidence when trying to decide who is a good risk.

> What the admissions [officers] worry about is the mind set of the applicant. You feel at a gut level that a person can do it, then you stop worrying. If a person can be willing to bloody his nose, why should we not let them take the risk?

The picture of the feisty, determined student suggested in the above indicates the problems a lady-like, somewhat uncertain prospective entrant may have. Such a candidate may inadvertently exhibit the very characteristics gatekeepers look for to weed out candidates.

> Unsuitable candidates for this environment [are] people who are very shy, unsure; they may be very good students

but have not persisted in any one area as defined by them.

One gatekeeper explained quite explicitly what re-entry women would have to say to overcome doubts about their seriousness and chances of success.

> A reason for returning. A commitment to the time and effort it will take. Not someone who wants to fill time. Some reason, no matter how vague. I want her to be able to express to me some [specific] reason for coming back.

Re-entry women are also hampered by their ignorance of the system and so it is difficult for them to express a distinct preference at the start. When they know nothing of the specifics and the requirements for returning to school, they are necessarily vague in stating just exactly what it is they want to do. Administrators take vague expressions of interest as banality and see them as indicative of shallowness. Without greater attention to the range of problems or questions presented by each re-entry candidate, all are seen as frivolous, and no criteria are developed for separating the casual from the serious prospect. Some gatekeepers recognize this problem, and wish to provide background information to candidates before they are to be evaluated.

> The word evaluation is a threat. And people who come for the interview are very nervous because they know it. But returning women want questions and answers and not just a half-hour [interview]. There is a lot of vagueness when they come in. They don't know that there are six different schools and that you have to apply to one and that each has different entrance and graduation requirements. You've got to explain options and possibilities.

A final compounding of the problem of how re-entry women present themselves to gatekeepers is their interest in part-time study. As noted earlier, part-time study is not part of the approved pattern for students: There are problems involved in finding space for them in some programs, and both graduates and undergraduates will be ineligible for many kinds of scholarship and financial aid. The problem of maintaining enough momentum, sustaining interest in academic work, and thus performing creditably is one that staff and administration worry about. And the request to go part-time resonates ominously to those who are already worried about the dilettante stereotype.

> <u>Serious</u> part-time students should be permitted here. I'm for it for the degree-seeking student. I am not for it as a kind of enrichment program -- no holds barred. Maybe there should be some enrichment classes, but that should be decided on a category-by-category basis.

Even for those who are sympathetic, part-time work is seen as a transition only.

> If a person has been away for a while and did some college work -- or none -- and now wants to begin, I think they

should begin part-time and work into full-time status. It's impossible to make the transition if they stay part-time because I don't think you can ever achieve the goal.

This is an elite school with special aims -- to provide enculturation in the liberal arts ethos as well as a well-rounded education -- for students; those with a different aim should find a school more suitable.

Some schools are better prepared to serve part-time students than others. It depends on the talent of the individual. The marginal student who drops out and didn't find something satisfying, unless they did a lot of interim reading, they should probably attend a school with a lot of support for part-time study and others around with the same problems.

Again the theme of how students who are specially privileged and/or have special gifts is linked with full-time attendance. Here the theme of student commitment is added. Some schools are designed for -- or willing to accommodate to -- just any student. More particularly, the working-class student who has a job and goes to school can be fitted into an efficient and economical educational pattern: Classes are offered at both day and evening times; some commuter facilities may be provided; in some cases even child care is available. The students trying to "find" themselves can also be fitted in -- dropping in and out, returning and finishing at an idiosyncratic pace.

One such avenue is provided through continuing education (what used to be called "night school"). Students can use the Continuing Education program at this school for enrichment or general interest courses -- as well as enrolling in programs elsewhere. In fact, they might be expected to want to go elsewhere for enrichment, if that is what they want, and pay less for it.

To the extent that it can, this school should identify ways we can be competitive and strong in continuing education. But we are limited. If we could be competitive there are all kinds of reasons we can be attractive. [As it is,] odds are that not many people want to pay the extra price. The average [suburban] housewife can just as easily take a course in high school on Shakespeare as here.

One might expect such enrichment programs to serve as a trial or proving ground from which students would graduate into regular education. And to some extent such a transition does occur. But it is not easy. Officials who understand the complications of the pricing system of the regular as compared to the continuing education program are dubious about the advantage to the University in letting students circulate freely between the two systems. Continuing education courses are much cheaper, more open in admission for part-time or special classes of students, more generous on withdrawal refunds. If students need financial aid, their stipends will go further in that context. The University may permit but does not encourage the movement of people with many credits in the cheaper system into the more expensive, regular diploma program on the University. If such students are already some-

what suspect as not quite committed enough, there is that much less incentive to bend the institution to satisfy them. And so the student who resumes work through the continuing education program will find it difficult to prosper in the regular program. The course work is perceived as not quite so rigorous as the regular program (and so high grades will not mean as much). And the university feels gypped by people buying cheaper credits and then wishing to transfer at the last year or so of work into the more expensive system for the final "panache" of the expensive degree. In consequence, a re-entry woman will be somewhat stigmatized by her continuing education work and many barriers will stand in the way of her transferring. It will not be easy for her to show the kind of commitment that gatekeepers want to see.

All the problems connected with revising the structure of the University to adapt to change, and then finding the best and brightest in a new kind of student population, make some of the respondents (five of the twenty in this group of gatekeepers and managers) ambivalent about change. The part-time student issue, with its connotation of commuter, working-class, and less-than-elite education carries unacceptable connotations and is difficult to face, even by those who accept the necessity for change.

> We are not a street-car school; we never were. So I feel we will continue to be an institution for the full-time student. [But] the University is going to be encouraging and open to these folk [re-entry women]. Usually they come to see us when they are considering a return. We tell them what the problems will be [what language requirements they will face, what difficulties are involved in picking up language or math skills that have grown rusty], but we are not gloomy when the lady comes in.

And the problem of raising money, allotting scarce financial resources for this group [with its stereotype of prosperity as well as dilettantism] makes some administrators hesitant.

> To talk of giving money to people making more than faculty [that is, wives with husbands in a good financial position] is not politic.

Another group of respondents (five) are even more dubious. They cannot envision the University seriously changing to accommodate significant numbers of a new type of student.

> I can't think we are organized in a way that welcomes such a student. We're not set up for them in the first place. We would need an admission approach [a system for evaluating dossiers] to review and determine if it makes sense for the individual to come here. Two, we would need appropriate services that paralleled, not duplicated, the ones we have now. There are different problems for a forty-five-year-old person who is flunking from a kid who is drinking and raising hell. You would need people sensitive to that situation. Three, we would need faculty willing to work with this age group. I don't see the faculty ready to welcome part-time students.

And one informant is against even considering some of the changes necessary to provide the services that would attract older women students to the campus.

> I have been opposed to childcare as an institutional practice. There is great difficulty defending my position at times. But evaluative services in relation to the institution -- frankly, colleges and universities are not adept at providing childcare, even in lab schools. . . . In my own mind I challenge whether this is an appropriate role for the University.

From this perspective, if women with families are to return to the University, they must wait until their children are grown or else find childcare services in their communities.

If we review these dubious or discouraging stances among administrator respondents, we see how differences between the youthful cohort and the re-entry women students are perceived. The different emotional or personal problems of mature women are not seen as a plus necessarily, though they may well indicate a more serious commitment than that of the "kid who is drinking and raising hell." And the focus on cost-effectiveness in providing services to what has been the majority student group (young people between 18 and 22 years of age) eliminates any impetus to experiment with new services for new populations of students. Finally, the pessimistic view is supported by an appraisal of faculty support that is, as we shall see in the following section, quite realistic. Faculty do not yet see the necessity for bending the system (as through part-time study and special remedial efforts) to accommodate re-entry women. In this regard, these dubious administrators see no parallel to the case of the minority students, where special efforts to redress, at least partially, the former discrimination against them have been seen as necessary. Special recruitment procedures, orientation programs, membership organizations, and counseling services have been budgeted and provided. No parallel effort to redress discrimination against women -- especially older women -- is yet envisioned as possible.

However, not all respondents were so discouraging. Despite all the doubts and reservations, many respondents (nine) among the twenty staff and administrators interviewed were strongly in favor of taking a more active role in recruiting and encouraging returning women students, either full-time or part-time. These respondents suggested ways the appearance of re-entry women in classes would improve the educational setting.

> It would change the texture of the classroom. It would bring a flavor to get interesting discussions going instead of so much goddamn note-taking. And [this school] would be the better for it.

And they saw the opportunity as one to expand personal horizons for younger students:

> Basically, it is healthy for the younger student to sit next to someone their mother's age.

as well as for the older ones . . .

> For some who are working or married -- it can be enriching to both areas of life.

One supporter sums up the most enthusiastic response in discounting all reservations and stereotypes concerning re-entry women.

> Term pricing is against my wishes and if we do [initiate that policy] we will make an exception for [re-entry women who become] part-time students. Continuing education is the route for the employed adult. It is fine to go as far as we can with that. Another group, largely women, needs something else. Were we to make the assumption they are less able than 18-year-olds, it would be ludicrous. [These women] are less self-confident than they should be. But the [image of] the dilettante housewife is not supported by facts. Anyone who can arrange life and manage a home to include coming back to school cannot be a dilettante. Besides, it makes friends for the University.

Here, as in the no doubt unintentional double entendre of the preceding comment on "enrichment," the message of benefit to the University should be stressed. Elite private universities have, in a sense, an expensive package to sell. And they need an alert and appreciative market to show interest in their product -- a bachelor's diploma or graduate degree. That market is partly generated by friends and well-wishers of the University who express their admiration for the University in their community interactions. At the best, re-entry women will be sufficiently committed to their education to finance one of these expensive products. At the least, they will speak well or even enthusiastically of the University to other prospective consumers. The theme that expanding the pool for the undergraduate population might be politic as well as intellectually challenging and in the best high-minded egalitarian tradition is amplified in the following quotation which assumes that the shrinking population of students in the appropriate age pool will force universities to dip down below the strata exemplifying traditional understandings of "best and brightest." Or else universities can seek new populations and find the best and brightest among the new groups.

> We are very comfortable with the kind of student coming to the University. And the faculty are comfortable with that type and have not expressed much interest to have older students in classes. Let's go through the scenario with a drop in enrollment. Then faculty and administration will be quite responsive.

And, as another informant notes, policy changes will follow only from outside pressures that force change in responsiveness.

> I don't think we have [any policy about part-time students]. To my knowledge, we have not tried to identify [our] market within this [group]. The University basically sees undergraduate enrollment

as comprised of young people from 18 to 22. Maybe we've been that way because we haven't had to change.

The real impetus for change then, as with an effort to redress racial inequities in the educational system, comes from pressures -- political and general social pressure -- for the University to put real energy and effort (exemplified in real budgetary expenditures and serious planning) into answering the question of how best to meet the challenges of change.

But for the present, the system, certainly at the university we studied, is geared to the recruitment and selection of youthful students. The administration and staff take the responsibility of finding the undergraduates for the faculty to teach. And so administration and staff are keenly aware of their responsibility to maintain the quality of the pool and the candidate selection from it. And, as we shall see, they share many views, or the same range of views, with the faculty. Both staff from the gatekeepers/managers group and faculty from the teaching group in this study are concerned about the character and ability of students, the effort individuals can or should put into studies when they are part-time, working, and/or re-entry students and when they are in the regular or continuing education programs. Both groups of informants share a concern to express the ideology of egalitarianism as shown in willingness to educate those formerly discriminated against -- namely minorities. The staff have the responsibility to recruit them and provide support services. The faculty, of course, must facilitate their education. While staff and faculty share (or at least understand one another's) views on the general profile of an appropriate undergraduate student body, faculty are more explicit about the problems and satisfactions involved in the teaching process. And faculty have more experience in selecting and working with graduate students. In general, it is the faculty who have the day-to-day experience of interacting with students and assessing their promise. What do the faculty think about the diverse segments of the student population and the University's responsibilities for their education? In order to get at these issues, we asked faculty to tell us about any problem students they encountered, about how women fared in the faculty member's classes and discipline, about experiences with re-entry women, about attitudes toward part-time and continuing education students, about faculty experiences with especially good students, and about their feelings on correct deportment between professors and students. In the next section we turn to faculty perspectives on these issues.

II. Views from the Faculty

Educating Minority Students in an Elite Institution

As we noted in the introduction, the revolts of the sixties and their manifestations on college campuses in free speech movements and the press for black or third-world studies created awareness of the prior homogeneity of most college populations and the dearth of educational opportunity for most disadvantaged students. The first "new" category of students to appear in any number at this university for some time were black students. Members of this group, then, bear the brunt of educating faculty about -- at least making them aware of -- difficulties that the traditional elite private university will face

in adapting to new student populations. Perhaps it is not surprising then, that some faculty members discussed conflicts and dilemmas arising out of their interactions with minority students. Certainly, the problems an institution has in adjusting to a new group in the student body are highlighted by discussion of minority students. Respondents were asked whom they saw as the problem students, generally, and if they could recall any specially difficult or problematic students in the recent past. Here and elsewhere in the interview, faculty had the opportunity to talk about problem as well as promising students at both graduate and undergraduate levels. A few (three) didn't mention minorities, and another group (six) mentioned them, but not as a problem -- either because minorities weren't present in the department or because they presented the same range of good and bad as any other category of student. But thirteen respondents reflected on the problems caused by black students. Most of these reflections were couched within the perspective of a liberal ideology: The problem was not really caused by any fault in the minority person but by social conditions. This analysis could be quite sympathetic and sensitive to the problems of minorities.

> Sometimes it is difficult to draw them out and pull them into discussion. I don't push when they resist, and I feel it becomes burdensome for them. I didn't like to be pressed [as a student] to speak in a situation where I felt I didn't know anything or it was something I felt very intensely about and didn't want to discuss in public.

The analysis also included problems of minorities in elite schools.

> Minorities and women do have a problem in competitive situations [here], and [a small, elite college where informant taught previously] had a competitive situation also.

And it includes an understanding of the often inadequate preparation given black students in math, science, and in writing papers in high school.

> I know these men and women often are trying and often they aren't ready. They can't write junior-level English.

This understanding may lead to special efforts to help minority students catch up.

> I attempt to develop a stronger relationship with black students. I coach them more closely in reading and read [their work] more carefully, and I am more lenient in grading if they work. I allow for a defective [educational] background.

And it may lead to some impatience with the institution for not helping more:

> [This university] doesn't do enough with black students -- minorities is such a crummy word, you don't mean the

> Orientals, who often do very well. [The University] does not prepare the blacks either in advance or substantially about the rigors of education here.

Or it may lead to anxiety over unrealized goals.

> It is sad to see . . . [The blacks'] expectations are so high and their recurrent failure. And it may lead to feelings of guilt or fear of imputed bias. I sometimes worry if I were blindly to read the bluebooks without bothering to see who wrote them, I would appear to be a racist. It bothers me.

But some faculty distance themselves from responsibility and view the problem as lamentable but unresolvable.

> Unfortunately the black student is among the most serious problems as far as just getting through the course. I'm afraid a lot flunked out the first quarter. More are doing borderline D, F work. One black girl who flunked was in [science] and told me she would lose her scholarship. But she was doing absolutely horribly so there was nothing to do about it.

Some of the problem concerns how well minority students can perform as graduate students.

> We apply for a minority fellowship when we can, but we have no candidates now. We have to be careful about taking candidates who are not properly prepared. They have to be able to teach in their graduate student careers and so we cannot take students who are too weak to manage our own classes.

This view puts the problem on the system and the previous preparation or it may place the problem back on the persons themselves.

> In my classes, in the [upper division] courses in the past ten years, I have had no black student finish one of my courses. They always drop or fail to the point where they just give up.

Faculty members may also permit themselves to become very angry with black students -- perhaps indicating an egalitarianism in refusing to put up with unacceptable behavior from minorities just as they would do with anyone else.

> Shall I tell you about the one student I was angry with: It was a black student who was ripping off the University and doing nothing. He was asking me not to dismiss him because he needed the [scholarship] money.

Anger, as in the comment above, arises when minority students come into conflict, even if inadvertently through unfamiliarity, with the crucial norms and values of any educational system. The clash of

values is particularly evident in the following:

> One man who was in my class just disappeared, and I assumed he had dropped. And then it turned out he was still in the class, and flunked. He turned up and tried to bribe me with money [to pass him]. He explained that he was working full-time and was taking five courses and wouldn't do the work. And all I could say was, "Why are you taking a full course if you were working full-time?"

Professors in any educational system are sure to be outraged by this kind of student behavior. In the elite systems their feelings may be compounded by the feeling that systems lower in the educational hierarchy should manage such socialization (or discipline) problems. Whatever their views on whose problem these improperly socialized students should be, most informants in this category show an interest and concern for an egalitarian resolution. Only one respondent disclaimed any responsibility for integrating minorities into his discipline on categorical grounds.

> [My discipline] attracts very, very few blacks. I don't know if that is because of its reputation as abstract or not. Frankly, the blacks are not as good at abstraction.

However, the integration of minority students into the regular student population continues, and eight of these thirteen who were troubled by the problems of minority students present were also cheered by successes achieved by working with students.

> The good side was a woman last year who was so much trouble that I was angry before she even came to class. A black sorority queen. I learned that she had graduated top in the class and had had several offers from the best schools. But she didn't know what college meant, and she was not prepared for college work. I worked with her paper after paper and, modestly, helped her development. At the freshman year she was ready to begin the senior year in high school. She was two years behind in her grade skills. But she is still here. I see her from time to time.

Those who have observed the progress of blacks over the years since the push to integrate them into this university began, particularly in science and mathematics, are encouraged by this trend of growing success in educational achievement for blacks.

> A much larger number of black students are now out of this hole [inability to finish the course]. This quarter I have five blacks and three are doing perfectly all right.

They also point to examples of good minority students to balance out those who have been problematic. And they discuss the general problem of the visibility of "tokens" in making assessments of group performance.

> The blacks are an easy group to talk about: [but] if you looked at the total number flunked, a minority of the blacks are in that number.

The six respondents who discounted this issue as a problem in the first place were even more optimistic about the trends showing an improving success rate for black students.

> We admit somewhat more blacks at the margins of ability or preparation and so statistically they are a higher concern, through the drop-out [rate] is not so horrible.

And professors who have the opportunity to teach groups of minorities are particularly encouraged by their performance, and their special abilities they bring to the educational process.

> Black students have their heads together and know how to be aggressive about [getting an education]. Kids from rich backgrounds [often] don't know what they want to do, seem almost rudderless. It's almost as if the poor students have so much to do with their jobs and school that they have no time to worry about their psyches.

One professor was favorably impressed in making an assessment of the success of minority students.

> For two or three years I did a [special] section for [entering] minority students. And I followed their progress [afterward] through the four years. They developed magnificently. They were coming in with full financial aid, and they made it, at least that is my impression.

While most informants view minority student status as roughly synonymous with low socio-economic status and low academic preparation, one professor noted the range within the minority group.

> Some of our best and worst students are black. This university has a commitment to minorities [and so] the police and firemen and the new corporate elite send their children. These kids are from mothers and fathers in computer science, the army, bank employment. But then there is a chunk who have had less skills preparation.

But, as might be expected, only some professors have had the opportunity to teach any significant number of blacks. Like women, blacks are clustered disproportionately in many fields within liberal arts (as history and social sciences) and in education. The professors with the strongest and best elaborated perspectives are in these fields where opportunity arises to interact with black students. But some in this sample are in fields where blacks are few in number and have not been seen as doing well. Some of these professors have also formulated theories and developed rationales to explain this continuing pattern.

In summary, in reviewing the array of responses to the problem of integrating black students into an ongoing predominantly white elite university, some take responsibility for helping and integrating the students, some do not feel guilty nor try to take an active part in changing a pattern they see as entirely out of their hands.

Educating Women in an Elite University

Many elite universities have histories of recruiting males only or of quota restrictions on the number of women accepted. White this university is not part of that historical pattern, it has restricted the entrance of older women in the past. Though it is now quite egalitarian in its admission practices, the halo effect of previous University policies can still be found in some attitudes and practices of the faculty. Women's issues are not likely to receive serious attention. For example, a recent (1978) hotly debated topic at one meeting of the liberal arts college faculty was whether to prohibit use of the generic "he" as indicator of sexist language in public formal debate as well as written reports of the college (as in the example: "We are looking for the best man for the job"). Some faculty member ridiculed the issue as trivial and thought it would lead to a grotesque butchering of the English language. Others, men as well as the few women present and on the faculty, defended the issue as important. The motion passed by a resounding voice vote; nonetheless faculty members continue to use the generic "he" in public discussion without reprimand from the Dean who chairs the meetings. Another example of what might be taken to express mixed or ambivalent feelings about women can be seen in the continuing effort required to establish a women's studies program. Many universities already have such a program; this university had not yet finished (in 1979) debating the issue.

Of course, the issue of how to gauge receptivity to women on a university campus is complicated, and many other, more sophisticated indicators than the two offered here would have to be developed and considered before making a substantiatable judgment. Any such judgment would have to be comparative, showing the progress of a university in relation to some standard of compliance -- in both spirit and letter -- with affirmative action. Here we approach the problem by analysing the responses of twenty four informants who discussed their teaching experience at this university. This analysis offers some textual detail for the array of belief systems found in interviews with professors singled out by re-entry women respondents in the larger study as either particularly helpful or obstructive in the course of their educational experience. Again, a cautionary reminder in evaluating these remarks is in order; for all respondents recognized the interviewer as a spokeswoman on feminist issues. Whatever that recognition may have done to influence responses is not known. But it is useful to consider that recognition in evaluating what each respondent thought it suitable to say.

Faculty members (and administrators with joint positions) were asked about their view of women in class -- whether they were as serious as men at both undergraduate and graduate levels -- and about women's academic performance in general. Nine respondents denied that there

were any differences between men and women, and one of the respondents denied the validity of the negative stereotype of the academically uncommitted female.

> If there is a class of [women university] students who expect to marry on graduation, I don't know them.

They made such remarks as "I am blind to the differences," or "there is no difference (in ability) by sex at all." They also disclaimed any bias against women.

> There is not the slightest prejudice against them. They just don't go into philosophy.

But it is interesting to note that five of those respondents offering flat disclaimers were from the group chosen because re-entry women students had specifically mentioned them as difficult for women (particularly re-entry women) to work with.

Some of these responses were in answer to the question: Are women as serious students as men? A few of these informants (five of the nine) then qualified their responses at some time in the course of discussion. These qualifications (primarily about the commitment and aspirations of women) were expressed through themes that appear in a number of responses.

One theme in modifying remarks about the seriousness and the academic-professional performance of women stresses that irrespective of the professor's wishes or personal beliefs, the careers of women are circumscribed by family responsibilities. As one professor in a hard science remarked:

> Women are married, and the field is an avocation for them, for family comes first. It has nothing to do with quality. Women still have difficulty gaining a career, and once married, the career is over in many cases. I feel that if both are equally trained, it will probably turn out that the wife goes along with the husband. . . . It has nothing to do with ability or the gift or intelligence, but the difficulties of career.

Knowledge that these circumscriptions will arise makes it difficult for women to follow a career line.

> [Women are as serious as men] . . . given a certain indecisiveness about career . . . as specific employment. Some start out really intent on being a biologist, for example, and then do that for a few years and decide on a career as a home-maker and mother and then another career after that. That's what I mean by a certain indecision -- that we are struggling to solve as a society now [as men also change careers].

And the labeling of these difficulties as "indecisiveness" casts a pejorative halo over the question of career transition of which both students and faculty are aware. To continue the example suggested in

the foregoing quotation, the difficulties facing women who wish to resume a career in biology are serious problems concerning how to redevelop rusty skills in math and science; these matters are not problematic because of indecision but because of exigencies in professional training and practice. More generally, the image of the ideal-typical career as one following a single uninterrupted line is one which involves pejorative evaluations of alternatives--such as those women may wish--or be forced--to choose. The real benefits of these alternatives, accordingly, are difficult to perceive and assess in our society (Hochschild, 1975).

Another informant sidesteps the issue by observing that career aspirations are not the same as basic talent, and that women are less likely to need a career in any case.

> It is somewhat likelier that women will not require a profession as much as men do. But on the other hand, the professional aspiration doesn't make for difference in ability.

Yet if women do follow a career line, a fourth informant feels that dual commitments to home and career mean that women will not achieve as much as men.

> At the graduate level men are more career-oriented than the women. I feel women graduate students aren't dedicated to [my discipline] as a career. [They show] lack of enthusiasm and dedication and long hours [in the discipline] as the most important thing in life. Our women think more in terms of getting a reasonable job, but not to kill themselves. They are not thinking of the National Academy of Science or the Nobel Prize. It seems they're not out with that drive. Increasingly we have very fine women students and they get married and think of career as a viable option where they are not thinking to reach the top. They're going to go where their husbands go.

It is important to remember that we have no corroborative data from the women in the disciplines of our informants. These informants do not seem to be aware of how much data now show women fearing divorce or wishing to prepare themselves for independence (Angrist and Almquist, 1975; Rand and Miller, 1972). In addition, here, as elsewhere in this discussion, the level of understanding about the pressures on women is not great. And so informants do not perceive, nor take responsibility for, the various ways women are given "messages" that too much enthusiasm and dedication to careers in women will be punished. Not only their potential suitors but also peers and supervisors in the professional world reflect beliefs that female roles (in marriage and the family) should come first and/or will have to be sacrificed to professional ambitions in ways not required of men (Coser and Rokoff, 1971; Rossi, 1972).

Occasionally a mocking comment seems to cover a pejorative or judgmental undertone about the level of career commitment a young woman shows.

> Last year I had excellent juniors. One went to graduate school. One is very bright, but she wants to get married. And far be it for me to break up young love.

Another way of belittling women's intellectual commitment is to focus on their behavior as empty of serious content. It is hard for some to envision the possibility of feminine behavior and seriousness in combination. And so they are "turned off" by what they can only interpret as highly inappropriate behavior. Here is how one professor responds to what he sees as flirtatious, sex-stereotyped behavior.

> In my classes [the women] are as serious as the men. I don't think I get on well with those who are finishing school types [with seductive ways who bat their eyelashes]. I don't respond to their flickers, and they just go on to greener pastures.

While the five informants cited above saw the dual career commitment of women as a limitation, a few (two) saw it as a positive factor. Women can afford to be relaxed scholars.

> In general we have experienced a change because of the poor job market. [But] our graduate women seem less under pressure and less uptight. And they can afford to be disinterested. Women are not as ambitious in the traditional ways of high status, high money. They are more serious about job satisfaction and that is more important than prestige and salary.

A somewhat double-edged estimation of women's advantages in the scholarly or professional worlds was offered by those who saw career advantages accruing to women because of their sex. Although offering no evidence, three respondents thought women had a better chance of getting jobs in academic fields of narrowing opportunity through affirmative action hiring policies.

> Women Ph.D.'s may have a better chance than men.

If women understand their allegedly special opportunity, it motivates them to persevere even in fields with shrinking job possibilities.

> Possibly, more [women] complete the degree than men because affirmative action means more jobs will be available for women than for men. If they are white males, none of them are likely to get jobs.

This theme, with its underlying assumption of special privileges for women and minorities, is picked up again in the third professor's remarks.

> Women in [my discipline] can write their own ticket--and if they are black women, Harvard and Yale will be clamoring for them.

But women are not likely to attain this privileged position. (Despite these remarks, the professor cited above belongs to a department

with no women members and a history of difficulty with female students, according to other informants.) And these respondents see a number of problems arising for women, in their educational endeavors and beyond, from gender role socialization. Women lack the self-confidence of men.

> Women think they're not good at abstraction.

And, perhaps for that reason, women are not as aggressive nor competitive in the academic setting. They may have to be pushed with benign paternalism.

> [A woman] teaching [in my discipline] now is my invention. I bulldozed her into [an Ivy League school] and bulldozed the Committee into giving her a Wilson. She doesn't know how much of a part I played. She is someone who hardly opened her mouth. She is very much in the field [now], and I saw her at the meetings.

While three informants discussed lack of aggressiveness and self-confidence as problems for women in their field, two professors pointed out that women often lacked mechanical and tinkering skills required in some forms of scientific work.

> Well, the technical skills of soldering -- these are more likely to be possessed by men than women. Women are generally less adept in the laboratory [where there is] a heavy reliance on instruments to be built and maintained. Men know which end of the screwdriver to use.

In summary, if one considers all of the themes introduced in discussions between professors and the interviewer, the general tone is, at best, cautious. Those professors who see women as better in some ways than men (e.g. more serious, more stable, more conscientious) do not see them as better in other, perhaps more significant ways. These informants qualify remarks by saying women are not necessarily brighter, more creative, and more intellectually inquiring. They do not, of course, offer any qualifications about men with regard to female stereotypes -- e.g. that men are not necessarily warmer, funnier, more obliging than women. Those who say they see men and women as absolutely equal qualify their remarks with references to the social circumstances creating inequalities. Again, as in discussions of the performance of black students at the University, some see women's role in the University as not sufficiently advantaged and feel guilty about it; some accept the situation as out of their control and point to early socialization and other social pressures to "explain" why women are not as committed or don't do as well as might be expected otherwise. However, more respondents do not see any serious problem in the treatment of female students and so do not feel disturbed by the status quo. These informants seem to feel confident that egalitarian principles are in operation. Only the inability of women -- again, perhaps from their socialization and commitment to family -- will keep them from the same academic and professional opportunities the men receive; none of the accumulating view (Roby, 1972) is considered. And, in hard times, as the present, women may even have the advantage under affirmative action guidelines, although, again, no evidence to support this view was presented.

Faculty Responses to the Re-Entry Woman

Whatever the difficulties in assimilating -- and educating -- minorities and women students, when they are part of their age-graded cohort, the University institutions and services can make an effort to incorporate them and try to meet their needs. Thus, the University can be proud of its relatively rapid adaptation to an influx of minority students in recent years. And the population of women now represents about half of the total undergraduate group, while in earlier days it was somewhat less, when male-female housing facilities were more strictly allotted than they are today.

The perception of an older-aged cohort presents different problems and, as we have seen in reviewing staff-administrator perceptions of this group, it is not yet clear that the private, elite university is as ready to adapt to this group as it was to a substantial number of minorities. In some ways, staff and administration are more alert to the problems and issues re-entry women present for the University than are faculty; for the staff have the responsibility to provide services for them if they come. And the higher levels of administration must formulate and establish the policies which set the guidelines for this service.

The faculty provide the most essential service, of course, in their teaching and advising. But, at the undergraduate level, they delegate authority for selection and take the mix of students provided them by those responsible for the recruitment process. At the graduate level, faculty exercise more independent choice in each department or school, and so at this level faculty images and expectations of the re-entry woman may be more fateful for any such candidates than they are for undergraduates.

The general separation of faculty from the choice of which set of students they will teach is reflected in the vagueness of some informants on the issue of re-entry women students. There are still very few such undergraduate students on campus at any one time (twenty or thirty out of an undergraduate population of two thousand will not be very noticeable). Although departments in arts, humanities, and social science are likely to have had a few re-entry women graduate students in recent years and the school of education has had many, these students are not visible beyond their own disciplines. Professors in fields without such representation know little of the experience in other departments.

It is not surprising, then, that ten of our faculty respondents had no clearly developed image of such students or else saw the possibility of re-entry women in their particular discipline as remote -- if not out of the question.

The most pessimistic respondents pointed to the difficulties presented by their particular disciplines. Adequate preparation in math or science, for example, was seen as impossible within the pattern of an interrupted career. They don't know any re-entry women, or can't remember meeting any of them. And the very few students they know who have taken a little time out from school hardly qualify as re-entry students.

> We have almost [no older students] at the undergraduate level, or at the graduate level either. Sometimes graduate students take a year off to find themselves, but I don't count that as re-entry ...

And so, if there are re-entry students in these programs, they are extremely rare, and still quite young.

> My students are almost exclusively 18 to 22 year-olds. I had one older woman, and when I say older I mean 26, who did perfectly all right four or five years ago.

Some of the pessimism expressed is related to the structure of support resources provided by the University. There are no childcare services:

> I have been pushing at this University for a childcare program. We needed it badly when we came here and finally had to make arrangements outside. Federal and state laws make it very expensive is what I have been told. And I have been told we cannot afford it here.

And there is no suitably tailored counseling service:

> The key problem is lack of confidence in returnees; and the admission people should recognize that and help women to deal with it.

These are, as the analysis of staff-administration interviews has suggested, problems of service that are currently considered and debated by administrators. However, the status quo remains unchanged as yet; and the rigors of the demands made in some disciplines are not mitigated by support services. And so only the hardiest and most resourceful of women can succeed.

> [In my field] we don't really have older students. There is one woman in her 60's; I am amazed that she's done it. She lost her husband and is alone so she can give full concentration [to her studies]. If a student hasn't received the undergraduate degree by 24 to 25, it is pretty difficult to put up with the demands, the discipline, the stringent time commitments. And the economic needs of older people are different. [They are not so readily able to accept the poverty life-style associated with education.]

All of these difficulties lead some departments to regard older students as poor risks. In consequence, they may not be considered suitable candidates for graduate school when the department makes its selection. As one informant explained:

> The graduate policy in this department discourages older candidates because of experience, not ageism, I hope. But it is a department policy.

In addition to those professors who view the re-entry woman as a dim or unassimilable figure, generally irrelevant to their programs, there are a few who view these women sympathetically, but see serious problems that such women must overcome in order to be successful. The biggest problem (mentioned by three respondents) is lack of confidence.

> [One woman] was horribly lacking in self-confidence as a student though she knew she was able in everything else. This crippled her though she did not fail -- she did pretty well; she got B's. She never opened her mouth in class when everyone else talked a lot.

Occasionally, a sympathetic professor will actively intervene in such cases, remonstrating with the student.

> [A re-entry student] in her early 40's -- [extremely successful in her own private business] -- but she tends to be very defensive. [Another professor] and I had to yell and scream at her. She would make the assumption, as many of these women do, that intellectual aging is like body aging. Such women feel that the young and energetic must be doing better in class because they have so much more physical stamina -- how can an older woman keep up? I answer by saying, you are going to use your mind, not do the 100-yard dash.

Or the professor may observe, diagnose, and make special overtures to the better re-entry students as in the following instance.

> The first re-entry I had ... didn't survive. She was weak in skills, didn't have financial resources the others had. The other two were bright, stood out, more conservative and more scared than other students ... I made it clear to them that I understood that they had more freedom [to choose fields of interest], that they were not to worry. But they were more reserved and more anxious than other students.

The foregoing examples suggest attitudes of cautious optimism: Once re-entry women overcome their own doubts and fears, they are likely to do well. A second cluster of faculty attitudes presents a mixed evaluation of ability, conscientiousness, and presentation of self among re-entry students that respondents have known. Five professors presented such views. Two of these five focused on the benefits of plodding; like the fable of the hare and the tortoise, determined women could perform successfully if they kept at it.

> I have several re-entry women students. Not particularly able, but hard-working and usually in the upper part of the class and always well-disciplined and very nice and easy to get along with.

Determination can also make up the difference when the re-entry woman is insufficiently prepared to begin.

> I remember a number [of re-entry women]. Some were very good, extremely conscientious. Their background was weak, but they compensated.

Another ground for "mixed reviews" on re-entry women concerns their image problem. One professor spoke of a highly regarded re-entry woman student as "mousy but has a mind like a razor." The second professor in this cluster saw re-entry women as independent and resourceful, but too rigid.

> I've had two re-entry women students. They were distinctive in that they refused to put up with shit. They would try to circumvent any University rule that didn't make sense to them. The bad side is that self-assurance includes the way they see the world. It is hard to convince them that there may be other ways of seeing the world.

A third professor picked up the foregoing theme, but included a sympathetic insight into how certain problems of rigidity might be related to defensiveness developed in other areas of life.

> I once had a student -- who was an older woman, one of the [wealth suburb] types, though I don't necessarily mean that pejoratively. And it was a race relations course, and she could not accept the reality of white racism as a general phenomenon in the institutional sense. She could understand individual bigots but not that there was something wrong with our way of life. And I think [the course] made her angrier because she was also being told the same thing by her children.

In summary, older people inevitably present a different mix of skills and experiences from the younger cohort. And, as the respondents in this category, some faculty sympathize with the problems -- and rigidities -- that are likely to appear. These faculty members try to break through the defenses they see in their older students in the effort to impart new perspectives. And these respondents see both the advantages (commitment) and disadvantages (rigidity) -- for themselves as pedagogues as well as for the students -- when re-entry women turn up in classes.

A substantial number of faculty informants (nine) were enthusiastic about the appearance of re-entry women on the campus. Some of these professors thought it was good for the University -- and for the professor personally -- to have such students around.

> I had one last quarter and just left one at the office right now. Their experience always helps educate me. They serve to bring one part of the real world back to the University, and that is something I value.

One way these students benefit professors is through class participation; the re-entry student is seen as sparking discussion, livening things up. Two professors described their experience with such students.

> [This woman] was bright and spoke up in class. Just delightful. No troubles about talking and did well. One re-entry woman in my class was bright and alert and asked provocative questions.

Or, as another professor put it:

> It is valuable to bring a new approach and to have some experience of the world.

Contrary to the view of the re-entry woman as hesitant or lacking in self-confidence presented earlier, professors in this group see the re-entry woman as specially self-reliant.

> One category [of particularly good student] is the older woman -- usually with a family. In my experience these students are highly motivated. Their priorities and goals are fairly clear in mind. Of course, they would have had to be, especially if the children are still young. And they are working through whatever changes this step is causing in this marital relationship, and they are very bright on top of that.

And a few informants point to the track record of these women as indication of that ability:

> We have recently nominated [an older woman] for the residential fellowship.

The most positive statement about re-entry students comes from a professor with departmental and administrative experience in reviewing their work.

> Older students always stand out because they are highly committed and tend to see you a great deal. You get to know them well because they tend to tell you their history and life. They are all able. I have yet to have one that can't muster it. There is no problem with their work.

The overall presentation by faculty, though it is mixed and perhaps somewhat colored by expectations of what the interviewer would like to hear, suggests a greater openness to the re-entry student than some, in administration and staff categories, might have expected of them. More than half had something positive to say; nine faculty respondents expressed positive feelings, without reservation; seven were mixed but somewhat positive, and only five were dubious or indifferent about returning women students on campus. Some who already hold feminist perspectives (the three women in the sample who responded to the faculty interview schedule and the four men who were known previously as sympathetic to feminist causes on campus) could be expected to be sympathetic toward and optimistic about re-entry women on this campus. But for the remainder of the faculty, positive experiences in particular instances seem to create open-mindedness about future possibilities.

Do Part-Time Students Have a Place in the Elite University?

But this positive picture is somewhat modified when one considers faculty attitudes toward part-time students. The good student gives full-time commitment, in the view of many in this study (fifteen of twenty-one respondents). If the re-entry student is part-time, at the very least the educational process is under handicap. The most extreme position is taken by seven respondents. They see part-time work as impossible in their department, particularly at the graduate level.

In support of this point, they note the necessity for full-time immersion. The structure of the field may demand constant work.

> [Part-time] doesn't work in [science] because of the commitment that is required. Lab work is time consuming ... we demand so much of our students, that if a student is not working ten or twelve hours a day, that student could definitely not make it. My students are here until ten or twelve at night.

Another scientist reports:

> Our undergraduates should be full-time; if they are going to do anything that will matter, it takes a real commitment. There is an enormous amount of knowledge accruing and to get to the forefront, it takes a lot of hard work.

Thus, even when the education of undergraduates is in question, the implicit reference group seems to be the graduate students. The notion of commitment and striving to reach the "forefront" all suggest preparation for advanced professional training. The hard sciences and the professional schools are particularly likely to present this position.

The expectations of departments, teachers, students may be geared to full-time participation.

> At a school like ours a student is required full-time. We don't admit any more than we can handle in the studios. And students come to study with particular teachers.

This theme of making the best use of scarce resources is caught in the opinion of the following professor, who also raises the issue of division of labor in higher education: Let other types of schools educate the part-time student.

> For the graduate level, full-time only, and we are only a Ph.D. program. There is a place for the rest but we can't do everything. We can't afford it because space is too precious. We want to use it all of the time -- and we run all year.

Implicit in this argument is the notion that other schools may have to make the effort to adapt their all-year schedules to the part-time student, but this school will not. The effort involved in juggling

schedules, fitting two students into one studio or one laboratory bench is just not imaginable. Further, the "best" training would not be possible under these circumstances.

This concern that the "best" education can not be provided in less than full-time doses is compounded by the view that students themselves need the full-time immersion for optimal effect: The contacts that socialize a student and make a student useful -- may only arise through constant interaction. A department will even make sacrifices to maintain this level of student commitment. Of course, these sacrifices are in some sense self-interested. For as the following comment shows, where students are needed to shoulder departmental teaching duties, they have to be around to do them.

> I think the department is wise in not allowing the part-time Ph.D. student because it can go on forever. There is no real chance to shape their graduate program; they are subject to classes offered at seven at night or whenever they need to go. We need to have them around for teaching. And they need the atmosphere of the University and coming in once a week for twenty years doesn't do it. There are some sacrifices because we don't have as many students as we could have.

And a department will depend on full-time students educating one another. One respondent saw this process as absolutely essential at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

> [In my field] part-time is not possible. It is not just attending classes, but a good deal of education is talking with one another. If a student is working half-time he misses that part. They have to get to argue with one another and talk to one another, and [spend time] hanging around at [a local] bookstore.

Another professor saw the concept of part-time as negative at any level of education -- and for teachers as well.

> We have discouraged it. In general, we don't have it. In our mind it goes with the terminal Masters which we think of as a poor objective. We think better people are interested in the Ph.D. We want better ones. And the better ones want it all. Half a degree must be a half-assed person. Part-time, you wouldn't get as far in two years as you would full-time in one. It is a matter of concentration and depth, not just area. We don't have part-time faculty. What you do part-time you only do with part of you, so a person who teaches only half of the year gives us less than one-third service. It is the same idea. If the time is divided, you are not entirely there even for the fraction that you are there.

These remarks show the pervasive nature of the pejorative attitude toward part-time participation -- even beyond realistic assessments of the teaching enterprise. Many academics divide their time between

teaching and research, administration, and outside professional commitments. In a sense, then, their teaching commitment is part-time. But this division of effort within time-honored, traditionally acceptable categories obscures the problems attendant upon the juggling of time and schedules.

The remaining informants in this category (nine of the fifteen) were dubious about part-time study but qualified their remarks in some way. Some thought the option should be offered though it was less than desirable. Since sustained contact is important, another way would have to be found for students to develop it.

> I regard full-time as the norm for undergraduates; but there is no theoretical objection for someone who takes six years, working part-time. I know very good students in night school who work full-time and who get their degree awfully slowly. An essential part of college and in graduate residence at school is at least some device to bring you into the informal contact with other students. A big source of learning is what they get from others their age. In going full-time, this comes about naturally.

This view does not consider the possibility that a large enough group of part-time students may form a "critical mass" to teach -- and interact with -- one another. But professors who haven't really considered the issue may nonetheless consider part-time study a possibility -- and admire those hardy enough to attempt it.

> Not sure I have thought about that ... All my students are full-time and the children of affluent parents who can pay. It's hard to be a part-time graduate student because you miss out on the ongoing day-to-day things that have a real heavy consequence for success or failure on the Masters level exam. It's tough to be part-time. I admire those who go part-time and work.

Others were dubious about acquiring part-timers: They might dilute the program.

> A large number of part-time would further vitiate the sense of commitment [already in peril through declining job opportunities in the field].

They would have to be carefully selected for appropriate fields.

> If the purpose is to become a research-oriented person, you have to be full-time to grasp the research ethos. But if in professional training or non-research, there is room for leeway -- in the technical institutes or for a teaching career.

But the general view of this group is that full-time is really best.

> Ideally students should go full-time if they can. I think they ought to have the opportunity -- and when there is no other way to do it -- to go part-time. I don't say go heavily into part-time programs, but there should be some flexibility.

And, echoing a theme developed by some informants from the staff-administrator group, one informant considers part-time education within the overall problem of changing student populations.

> If not now, there will have to be [part-time programs] built in in the future because of declining enrollments. I am thinking of adults rather than adolescent students for these part-time students.

Such considerations are still relatively foreign to professors accustomed to facing a youthful undergraduate group; one informant, adamantly opposed to part-time students, modified his opinions at the end of the interview when re-entry women students were suggested as a possible part-time student group. The commitment of young students is not seen as strong enough to survive the sporadic nature of part-time work. The professor in the following quotation sums up the problem.

> If they are here, they might as well be here. We tend to have a group of kids who do the part-time thing. We give them a lot of rope to hang themselves, then they slow down in the middle of their student careers. [Part-time] is done well sometimes; but it is harder. You've got to have their attention all of the time if you believe in teaching.

These last remarks capture something of the "special" quality that respondents feel may accrue in this University environment. Teachers in commuter colleges have to be more flexible in their expectations for they know students have other responsibilities to work and family. But here, in the ambience of a private, elite university, the practical exigencies of the world are somewhat removed and may not, therefore, exert a dampening effect on pedagogical expectations. In general, then, the majority of respondents gear their expectations to what they see as optimal teaching and learning contexts: full-time immersion of students in the educational enterprise. And so they are indifferent to, or ignorant of, any efforts to moderate or alter the belief in the necessity for full-time work, even those made in other, traditional and elite universities (Shapiro and Driscoll, 1977).

While the majority of professors interviewed view part-time work as less than optimal, there are the few (six) who see nothing wrong with it. Two in this group have absolutely no trouble with the idea and express no reservations:

> Jesus Christ! It doesn't matter to me. A lot need to go part-time because of their life style and what they are doing. I imagine we'll see more and more of them. [This university] just didn't allow that for many years.

> The undergraduates might miss some of the activity aspect if they don't go full-time. We have no program for them. Everything is organized around the residence halls. But what the hell, it depends on the student.
>
> My personal view is that [part-time] is all right. My goal as a teacher is to have the best men and women in class at the time the course meets.

Another two respondents think the part-time student is a positive advantage to the program. Both see the pull on a student between work and school as a positive dialectic.

> Honestly, I think part-time is a very healthy position to be in. If you have the income and no worry about paying the tuition, then the longer it takes, the more perspective you have in the field. And it takes a great dedication to the field to retain interest at the end and to lead that split life between jobs and academic careers. I think it leads to a more mature approach.
>
> As long as the part-time students keep enthusiasm going and finish the degree, I don't see any problems. In fact students with more experience with the outside world exploit the University more for their own advantage, and I think that is a good thing.

Finally, two respondents see educating the part-time student as a definite part of the University responsibility. And, like one of the faculty with reservations described earlier, one of these faculty members links the idea specifically to serving the older re-entry woman student.

> Part-time principally benefits urban women — older women with children. My prediction is that we will take part-time women in two years. But my department sees its responsibility to scholars; it doesn't take its responsibility in a major metropolitan area seriously, nor its responsibility to the community. As the economic situation deteriorates, my conservative colleagues will move over. I'm in favor of it. I think a major urban university has a responsibility to the community.

While we do not have definitive and representative data from the faculty, we do find a range of attitudes suggesting that at least a small portion of the faculty are ready to serve a changing population of students with modified time commitment to their studies. We can now provide one of our dubious informants from the staff-administration sample with some data lacking from his estimation of the faculty.

> You would need faculty willing to work with this age group. I don't see the faculty ready to welcome part-time adult students, even full-time are viewed with some reluctance. Maybe I'm being rough on the faculty. I haven't talked with any.

While a small number of our faculty respondents perceive the changing nature of college populations -- and the need for all institutions of higher education, including the private elite universities -- to adapt to the changes, most do not yet see the necessity for adaptation. But, as one of the administrators, reported in the first section, suggested faculty may become more flexible "if the scenario changes" and the number and quality of good students requesting admission drops.

The Concept of the Continuing Education Student

The problem in adapting to the needs of the part-time students is compounded by the aura surrounding continuing education. Continuing education (CE) is seem as the same thing as evening division or night school; an educational program for working students, housewives, and generally those only partially committed to the educational enterprise. Although some regular professors teach in both programs, continuing education courses frequently rely even more on graduate students and recent Ph.D.'s of the University to maintain a variety of offerings than does the regular program. Thus, as one staff person put it, CE "is a step child" of the University. And in the words of another informant:

> The liberal arts college and the continuing education program are natural enemies; CE employs liberal arts faculty [taking their time and energy from college activities] and wants to approve courses not quite up to snuff. So there is built-in tension between the divisions.

Most of the faculty are disinterested; only six respondents had anything at all to say about the program. It is outside their teaching experience. But, for those who do think of the CE program as a part-time, night-school effort, and who have some experience with it, the overall view is somewhat negative. Some of the same doubts noted earlier, that assail staff and administration, bother these faculty members as well.

The student will not be as committed in the continuing education program.

> In the evening division I teach a lot of older women from twenty-five and up ... It is a very sad crew. They are uncertain what they are doing it for ... Toting up the credits to get a degree for a purpose that some may not know or for some very practical purpose. They are more narrow so there is little enthusiasm about the subject.

Nor will the student be as able.

> I've taught in night school so I have taught older students, and the buik are not as good as the bulk here. But it's probably not a function of age. If they were good they would have completed their education in the first place. Or else they are too busy to do the work.

In consequence, the educational program has to be diluted.

> They tend to spoonfeed in the evening courses a little more.

At best, the faculty have mixed feelings.

> We do have part-time students in the evening division, and they can get a Masters degree. In general they have probably not done as well as the students going full-time though that is understandable. We have to substitute courses for what they really want because things are not offered at the time they go. Yet one of our best students got her MA on a part-time basis.

And one professor saw the necessity for opening up the regular instructional program to working students partly because of dissatisfaction with continuing education.

> I think people are entitled to go back to work [during the day] while they are taking classes at the University. I don't particularly care for the night school.

Only one faculty informant had something really upbeat to say about continuing education.

> The continuing education students were the most exciting students I ever had.

It is not surprising, then, that one of the staff-administration group assesses faculty response to continuing education programs.

> The entire press at [this University] is away from and suspicious of, a feeling of uneasiness about continuing education which equals part-time students in a way. There is a lack of distinction between the two. There's a fear that the CE program teaches welding. That atmosphere is embedded, a tradition; no champion to re-educate, no incentive to change.

As the last informant indicates, the problems presented by part-time and CE students are overlapping and may confuse the issue for many faculty members, even when they do not specifically mention CE in their discussion of part-time. But this issue, like the question of admitting minorities or re-entry women, is a plaguing one, for it calls for ever renewed consideration of what the University should be doing, whom it should be teaching, how standards of excellence and criteria for performance should be set. The issue also calls into question what responsibility the University should take for offering a better (or wider) range of courses in the continuing education program. And the discussion raises the issue of class and age bias surrounding the "step child" program at an elite university. The experiences of professors at graduate and continuing education "night schools" in many metropolitan centers suggests

that older, working students are often among the best and brightest when compared to the population at more elite institutions (Tuchman, 1979). The level of commitment among students in the 18-22 year-old cohort may also be narrow or uncertain and the incentive for education may also be unrealistic or vague. But the continuing education program -- and its products -- are regarded in a specially invidious light.

The Concept of the Good Student

Some of the difficulties faculty informants face in accommodating to new types of students may be inferred from their picture of the good student, gleaned from responses to questions about informant preferences and antipathies for certain types of students (feelings about types of student commitment, worries about dilettantism, narrow professional interests, or focus on grades) and illustrations offered of particularly good students from past experiences.

The easiest category for classification is the hard-working student. Ten respondents mentioned their belief in hard work, whatever other qualities they saw as important in formulating the category of good student. One sub-theme that emerged was that hard work could make up for a lot. It could help the conscientious person keep up with the more gifted.

> I have one particularly good student, an incredibly industrious fellow who is in the library all the time. And then there is the fellow ... with a God-given talent. So he does not have to be so diligent.

And hard work could help the undisciplined or "problem" student come out all right in the end, "who, by the end of the class has really pulled in together."

In a sense, hard work is the bottom line. For some professors it is the very least they expect. They will accept a narrow focus on grades if the student works hard.

> I expect them to take themselves and their work seriously, be committed like I am. I know they can do better work than they think they can. I come down hard at first and at the end I am only rarely not pleased. I will take any reason for hard work. I don't sneer at a student who wants an A for medical school.

But they are disappointed in or even angry with the lazy student.

> If I sense a student is lazy or just dragging it, I come down hard. I don't mind what a student does as long as he or she is putting it out: reading something extra, extra participation in class, doing the readings.

In addition to effort, seven professors talk about standards of performance and special abilities they perceive in the idealized good student. Three of these professors talked about this ability in terms of writing:

> For the smart ones, the bottom line is to write well.

Two spoke generally of productivity ("what they produce in class"). And two spoke of specific skills ("the kid who eats languages for breakfast") or scores:

> We expect students to be heavy on verbal and quantitative. Anyone below the seventieth percentile in math ability is suspect. I think we should demand higher.

Beyond these basic normative expectations of indistriousness and special aptitude there is a general outline to the idea of the good student. The basic picture evoked is one of the idealized and traditional undergraduate in an elite university: lively, wide-ranging interests, argumentative. Fourteen informants touched on some facet of this picture. The sub-theme of liveliness, the most subjective of this group, is discussed in terms of how exciting a student can be for the professor: Students are preferred who are quick, bright, alert, imaginative, creative; students who show enthusiasm, zest, spark. Informants are at a loss to specify this characteristic further.

The second sub-theme, that of wide-ranging interests, is described as found in students "intrigued with ideas." One manifestation of this theme is disinterested concern for learning.

> I guess this is one area where I am an ivory tower scholar. I prefer students that don't have pragmatic goals in mind, I hope they care for pure knowledge the way I do.

Another manifestation is the student who is well-rounded.

> I wish that more students would travel, particularly the undergraduates. And there are graduates who haven't been [downtown] or to the art museums. This is a great city, and there is more to be learned from going to the museum than from courses in some cases.

And this sense of well-roundedness, as in both the foregoing and the following view, tends to focus on the arts.

> I feel strongly about the importance of a liberal arts education, and that students should have inner resources and be able to keep their ass on a chair to read a book or to listen to music with appreciation.

This view is sometimes expressed in response to the question of whether the informant worries about dilettantism in student commitment. And a few informants insisted that the University needs more dilettantes. In each case, the concept was qualified to stress the difference between wide-ranging interests and shallowness.

> I don't think we have nearly enough dilettantism unless that is defined as not doing anything very well.

Or wide-ranging interests and poor planning.

> I think dilettantism is the only thing to save the University and to save [the students] though they are too adolescent to do it well. I have one student taking

courses with professors in English, sociology, and philosophy. That is dilettantism, yet directed to a particular interest. But to take sixty different studies in comparative literature, that is not dilettantism, that is just a waste of time.

It is interesting to note here the various uses of the term "dilettante." In the interviews with administrators, the term only emerged as a pejorative one, used in conjunction with the category housewife to indicate shallowness. Among the faculty, the term is differentiated into positive and negative aspects. The grounds for differentiating these polar attributes of dilettantism are not really clear, although the informant in the preceding quote has made an effort to pin down some particular positive and negative behaviors to be associated with the term. In general, the good qualities are reserved for the term dilettantism and the inept, shallow connotations are specifically excluded.

But the positive aspects of dilettantism are supplemented by other qualities students possess. The bright student is also identified by the curiosity shown in argumentativeness and inquisitiveness.

The quality of wanting to open up anything and everything. And the ability to challenge, to ask provocative questions ("sharp, articulate, interested and capable of arguing [a] position"), or, as one informant put it:

> Students who see past the orthodoxy of their discipline and who don't flinch from being treated as if they are equals.

The importance of this particular quality of the good student is perhaps best seen in its antithesis. Two informants in this group describe qualities that were especially irritating -- an intellectual conservatism, a resistance to curiosity, to being open-minded, to a general interest in all possibilities. Here is how one of them put it:

> A couple of years ago I was freshman advisor, and the students that I saw were violently career oriented -- though they clearly knew nothing about the careers they had chosen. They were terribly sure that to be cool was to be like that, and it was disgraceful to be in a state of questioning. After five interviews I became really angry. I consider it the nastiest form of immaturity.

The theme of liking openness -- disliking rigidity -- is reflected in faculty attitudes toward professionalism or careerism among students. The professors had definite opinions on the subject: Half were tolerant or even positive, and half were ambivalent or negative.

The positive remarks, as in the earlier quotation showing appreciation for any reason for working hard, including desiring an "A" for medical school, stress the industry of students in pre-professional training.

> Since we see so many pre-meds there are a lot of students highly oriented to excelling so they are probably better than other groups.

And these remarks, as in the following quotation, show a cheerful acceptance of professionally oriented students.

> I don't excoriate students for having ... or worrying about career goals. I am not impatient with pre-meds. I understand the crunch.

Or they show the ambivalence in acceptance implicit in any remarks of the "some of my best friends are ..." category.

> I don't get upset by pre-meds. Some of the nicest students I have met are pre-meds.

Sometimes, the thought of a great number of professional students to face is explicitly disconcerting.

> I am not bothered if by a fluke a roomful of engineers turns up ... Though if I had to deal with it, it would drive me crazy.

But the overall tone of these remarks is captured by the informant who saw careerist concerns as part of the variety of objectives possible within the student body.

> I am willing to help the careerist, someone who wants a good general education and then to go into his father's business. I care that they find something in the course interesting enough to work at. I try to help each person find something. I presume their interests are expressive of basic character.

The other five respondents are not so tolerant. At the very least they are dubious about motivation for learning and commitment to liberal arts among the pre-professionals.

> A literature course with a pre-med taking the course as an elective may be difficult because the pre-med assumes he doesn't have to work. They are not slow learners, but they have to be persuaded that this is a legitimate discipline and that demands can be made upon them to do the work.

Or the narrow focus of pre-med students may make an informant testy.

> You will get ridiculous questions [from pre-med students]. For example, should I read this paragraph? And coming up and asking you takes more time than doing the reading. They fear their minds will get cluttered with things that will not be on the exam. They don't trust themselves on understanding; they don't think. They don't trust themselves to reason out a problem; they would rather memorize how to work a problem.

At the most extreme, the idea of careerism is distasteful.

> I think students should be here to learn to expand their capacities as human beings. I dislike careerists -- those who are overly so, though it makes sense to prepare for a career later on.

The notion of careerism associated with a narrow focus on grades is thus one which, no matter how distasteful to the respondents, must be tolerated because it is a natural response to the competitive terms in which many understand elite education.

> The narrow focus I personally object to, but it's their standards and they have to live with it. I don't believe I can make a dent, and anyway, to some extent they're right. Occasionally an overweaning grade grubber is mildly irritating.

One interesting response from a minority of respondents explicitly sidesteps some of the standard performance criteria for the bright student with crackerjack abilities that one expects to find at a private, elite university. While not entirely disavowing the traditional expectations, these respondents make a case for taking the students as one finds them: "on their own terms"; "it's the people they are rather than the work they do." The important thing from this perspective is student self-realization:

> I wouldn't consider [someone] a poor student as long as they're happy. I don't consider a student a failure if one stays home to write a lot and think a lot and doesn't get a job.

A few informants in this category describe what might be called the endearing student.

> There are a lot of good, enjoyable students. Some who are just fun and not particularly brilliant or intellectually exciting but a combination of wit and warmth.

And this characteristic, like the brilliance or liveliness of the good student in traditional terms, is often hard to pin down.

> The term 'mensch' is the one that leaps to mind. A mysterious thing. It leaps to mind much sooner than general intelligence or knowing what I am teaching. A certain kind of grownupness. I don't know what it consists of. Self-confidence in part and articulateness, though neither is inevitable. They are quick of mind, though not necessarily in academic terms. I have many student friends of that sort.

One interesting aspect of this endearing quality that two informants mention is the quality of being helpful or sensitive to the professor. The helpful student is a godsend.

> The talker ... that you can always count on to carry through the rough spots. One who can always be counted on to say the provocative thing or to answer the question that no one wants to tackle. They don't always get the credit they deserve for helping you teach. Sometimes we depend on such students to carry us along. And there is sheer panic when they are absent or don't take care of it for you.

The sensitive student is one who understands the professor's needs as well as exhibiting an attractive personality.

> A sly humor, attractive for emotional and physical reasons. Kids with an amazing sensitivity to our problems.

In summary, this array of categories and responses suggests the parameters of expectations professors are likely to have and the normative judgments they are likely to make. The themes of eagerness, aggressive curiosity, hard work, special academic abilities, are expectable; the ambivalence about professionalism -- expressed even by those quick to mention their own tolerance for its more narrow manifestations -- is also understandable in a group of professors chosen mainly from liberal arts disciplines. The interest in unique qualities of students, and the sympathy expressed for the really nice or thoughtful, sensitive person were not so anticipated. Even though mentioned by a minority of respondents only, the interest in such students, including the wish to befriend them, suggests an almost wistful desire to see and interact with something or someone beyond the standard model of the bright student.

This wish arises in a somewhat different form, for other informants, who like the idea of diversity in the classroom. Nine respondents mentioned the older re-entry woman student as a provider of the stimulation, the interesting discussion, the changing texture of classroom interaction they found desirable. This theme, introduced spontaneously, indicates the importance of new categories of students as "leavening agents" in an otherwise overly homogeneous group. Even the students sometimes complain about the homogeneity of their group, according to one respondent, who heard them deplore what they saw as coldness and snobbishness in their peers. The homogeneity of the student population encourages a focus on common interests and an indifference to outsiders that can be galling to those ignored. Whether it is deliberate coldness or the lack of impetus to notice others because of the many pressing interests shared by the common group, the net effect is to extrude the marginal members. An unwanted pedagogical consequence is the dullness or sameness that may afflict student class discussion. From this perspective, homogeneity may also encourage a shallowness and superficiality in student perception of issues. The differences in age, race, socio-economic status may all contribute to enlivening discussion and mitigation of this shallow level of attention and similarity of past experience. While the disadvantages and obstacles for new types of entrants to elite schools are recognized in the doubts and problems mentioned earlier by professors reviewing the successes and failures of new groups of entrants (as minorities and older women) the overall benefits for university, classroom, other students, and the professors themselves are already realized by a number of our informants.

The Structure of Opportunity in Departments

1. Past Experience with Women Students

The views of professors are shaped to some extent by their experience. By chance or through the nature of their discipline, some have more experience with women students -- and with re-entry women students -- than others. In this section we consider some of the characteristics of department structure and culture that impinge upon students generally, including the re-entry woman. The number of informants is too small to provide useful cross-tabulations of patterns of department life and patterns of attitudes toward re-entry women, and so the following discussion is only suggestive of the array of categories or dimensions one might wish to consider in weighing opportunities and barriers new types of students, like the re-entry woman, may face.

Some of the issues are directly related to supply and demand. Departments that do well competitively (in attracting good graduate students and in placing their students in jobs after graduation) have little incentive to change their practices. Since these are all departments that traditionally have not attracted women students, they have relatively little experience with recruiting and training women. In this study, professors in such departments were also members of departments with no women faculty. Within this group, some respondents realized the limitations of their experience. They saw a relation between the ability of women students and the total number of women available for evaluation. As one professor confessed:

> To be honest, our best graduate students are male. But that is probably because most of the students are male.

2. The Ratio of Males to Females in a Class

The estimated number of men and women informants found in their classes provides an opportunity to speculate about a) the professor as drawing card for men or women, and b) the discipline to which the professor belongs as the drawing card. Most professors in this sample, as noted, are from the liberal arts, humanities, social science fields. Those who are in hard sciences (3) are also professors with less than half women students in their classes. But another five professors are in humanities and social science fields where women might be expected to congregate, yet they also have less than a fifty-fifty division of males-females in class. Nine professors say they have more women than men in their classes, and five professor claim an even division. In these three groups (8 with less than half women, 5 with half, 9 with more than half), five of eight professors any re-entry women complained about or offered any negative responses about were found in the group of eight who claimed less than half female students. Three of the negatively labeled professors were in the group of five who claimed an even distribution of males and females; no complaints were registered against faculty in the group of nine with more than half of their classes women. Women who, as undergraduates, go into departments that are predominantly male can expect to have to accommodate to the predominant male culture (and its expectations for <u>them</u>). Here is how one professor in the hard sciences perceived the ratio of men to women in his classes -- and the consequences of that ratio for the woman student.

> Three to one [men to women] is the ratio I would get, [although] there are a lot more women now than there used to be. But you still don't see the typical sorority-type female. I visited a sorority for dinner one night and was flabbergasted to see such beautiful dressers and women so well made up. The ones we see are more casual and possibly more career oriented. Now they look like normal young women as compared to what they were like ten years ago. They are indistinguishable from men on performance.

The professor in the foregoing quotation touches upon a number of issues that show the relation of the structure of opportunity to the ratio of males to females in a discipline or a class. The smaller the number of women students the greater the pressures on each woman to meet expectations for the "token." As Kanter (1971) suggests, tokens (of whatever sex or race) make efforts not to be conspicuous, not to attract attention to themselves. In the past, the few women in the hard sciences minimized their feminity in dress and makeup to avoid invidious attention -- and the snideness of remarks about their basic commitment to "serious" work. Even today, as the quotation suggests, an aggressively feminine presentation of self does not appear among the students in this department -- though the mannish appearance (not "like normal young women") has disappeared. Some of the pressure is off these individual women as their numbers in the department grow. But they are not completely free of pressure; none of them may feel entitled to the gorgeous dressing and makeup that startled this professor when he visited a sorority. If young women students in the regular cohort feel pressure, one can assume that equivalent pressures will be experienced by older, re-entry women who may seem even more out of place in these class rooms. In addition to whatever pressures they feel from being a relatively small number among a larger group of men, both younger and older women students may also respond to other aspects of the departmental ambience.

3. Departmental Ambience

The tone and style of interaction within a department may have a special effect on women students, particularly when departments have an historic pattern of inadvertent or institutionalized discrimination -- based on lack of the attractiveness of the field to women and the impressions that women had not performed well in the field when they tried it. And some departments may find it difficult to abandon the practice of discrimination. Here is how one disgruntled professor described this pattern in his own department.

> I am dissatisfied because women are at a disadvantage. The department would rather not let a woman in. The explanation ... given is that men are more cost effective because you lose more women along the line. That may or may not be true, but it shouldn't be part of the acceptance procedure.

In the department just discussed, the notion of cost effectiveness is supported by a continued flow of desirable male graduate student applicants. Such a department can afford to be choosy and not worry about its affirmative action efforts. Other departments -- particularly those that have historically attracted many women students -- can point with pride to their record.

> [Our department] showed much more sensitivity to women in the '60s before the women's movement [and before other departments were aware of their responsibilities to avoid sex discrimination]. I had women graduates in the '50s.

But the attraction a field has traditionally offered for women is no guarantee that the field has always been welcoming: Accepting women as undergraduates, preparing them as graduates for professional careers, and then finding jobs for them are three quite different and independent activities.

In the past, some of these welcoming disciplines have tolerated quite discriminatory views.

> Well, as you probably know, we're much fairer than we used to be. We used to be anti-woman. X, who is an old pig and [this university's] only [eminent] prize winner, would stand up at meetings and say 'women should teach in high school and men should teach in college.'

Some departments welcoming to female undergraduates were not only discriminatory about placement, but also about recruitment of female graduate students.

> In '66 there were very few women graduates. And the ages were scrutinized. The notion was that there shouldn't be very many women to begin with and thirty was regarded as too old to begin. Now we have many more women applicants than men, and many women (of various ages) in the department.

Students who enter today, in areas traditionally noted for receptivity to women or in departments eager to redress former inequalities confront the problems created by past history -- including remnants of an older guard among the faculty. And students are more likely to encounter such remnants where discriminatory practices previously flourished.

But resistance to women in general, or the re-entry woman in particular, is likely to be lower in departments where enrollments are dwindling and the competitive advantage of the department is also declining. Such departments are less likely to be as anxious about job or career commitment.

Here, as elsewhere, once a field is devalued, it becomes easier for women to infiltrate it, just as it becomes more difficult for women to enter a field once it is perceived as desirable by men (Tuchman and Fortin, 1979). Participating in the entering wedge, then, carries some of the bittersweet quality of the push to storm the barricades -- only to find the battle has moved elsewhere.

When the department cannot place all of its graduates anyway, disinterested scholars also provide some relief from the pressures of placement. Further, women may provide a better "mix" in the graduate program; three informants saw their department as acquiring better candidates than normally expected when women tied to the area enrolled in the program.

Thus far we have been discussing some of the departmental, historic, and current policies, approaches, attitudes of individual members that affect what might be termed the "ambience" of department life -- particularly as it will affect graduate students. While this discussion has focused on attitudes toward women, it has also considered the competitive position of the department in a larger market place. No respondent thought his or her department was terrible; most saw the difficulties of graduate placement as relative to the general market -- the particular department was doing as well or better than others in an overall situation of growing difficulty in placement. Some departments were able to compete more actively than others, courting prospective graduate students with large stipends, and also paid invitations to visit and examine the program in advance. Other departments lowered enrollments in graduate school, practicing, as one informant put it, "the contraceptive method" for reducing the superabundance of practitioners in the field. Once the program produced fewer graduates, the problems of placing them became more manageable. Of the seven respondents who worried about the competitive advantages of their departments, most (5) felt they were managing by eliminating the lower segment of the entering graduate student cohort; the top level continued at top quality and received reasonable placements after graduation. This strategy seemed to have no systematic effect on women's chances -- helping them in some departments and hindering them in others.

A counter tendency to a continuing policy of shrinkage develops around the need for graduate student helpers as teaching or laboratory assistants. In disciplines where women have traditionally been trained in great numbers (as English, European languages and literature, history) this need can help re-entry students -- particularly those with prior teaching experience.

> We are encouraging returning graduate students and that's a new trend. They have had teaching experience and we know we can only place people with more experience than our own graduate students can gain while they are here in the program.

Of course this kind of encouragement presupposes eventual placement of graduates in teaching colleges and not research universities. If the jobs are less attractive than they once were, they may be "left" to women. And, as already noted, women do tend to move into areas that men do not perceive as worthwhile -- just as women are pushed out of fields men begin to find valuable. Generally in liberal arts fields with shrinking enrollments or enrollments always perilously small (in terms of the assured continuance of the department) re-entry women students may expect welcome. The problem of placement in a job after graduation can be balanced against this encouragement in the recruitment stage at the student level.

In addition to those characteristics of department life that are limited by "market" factors and historical traditions of predominantly male, female, or mixed interests in the area, respondents sometimes mentioned idiosyncratic characteristics of department life, particular to that time and place. Two dimensions which may be of interest to

potential students (because of their effect on what we have termed the "ambience" of department life) are organizational governance and the pattern of formality. The first refers to the working structure of the department as primarily democratic (where all professors and even, in some instances, graduate student representatives take part in department decisions) or autocratic (where department chairperson and/or a small group of tenured professors make decisions). The second refers to the tone or style of interaction in a department as informal -- and breezy -- or formal. This second type of distinction is illustrated by one professor who explained differences across departments in the following way.

> In my college days I had formal relations with professors. Some departments are more conservative (than others). Take X Department. There they wear Hawaiian shirts and call everyone by first names and are called by their first names by undergraduates. That's not the case in [Y Department within the same school].

These differences in departmental tone and style may pose special difficulties (or offer special opportunities) to re-entry women. As informants indicated, they sometimes find returning women a bit hesitant, or rigid, in the face of openness and intellectual opportunity. For such women, the breezy informality of some departments may be disconcerting. On the other hand, re-entry women expecting treatment as peers may be disconcerted in more formal departments where distance is maintained between professors and students (Benjamin et al., forthcoming a and b). Problems of how to respond appropriately to meet expectations of appropriate tone and style within departments or disciplines are exacerbated by the idiosyncratic preferences of professors. In the next section we consider some of these preferences.

Professorial Preferences for (and Strategies to Elicit) Patterns of Deference and Demeanor

Because our returning women students had called attention to their perception of professors' approachability or distance as a factor in making the learning experience more or less difficult, we asked professors to tell us about their own views on social distance. And to develop some sense of their views on appropriate (and comfortable) patterns of deference and demeanor for themselves, we asked about their preferences in such matters as discipline, dress, and forms of address.

Questions of academic discipline are not major ones for elite universities where students expect to work in order to maximize return on their (and their parents) expensive educational investment. But, since the undergraduate body is mainly young and have youthful interests, issues do arise around class and exam attendance. Here, as in any university or college, professors in this sample are rather divided on the subject of discipline: A very few (3) say they absolutely don't care

> I don't mark off for attendance; don't ask for excuses.

-- or don't see it as their responsibility to supervise students.

> I don't care whether a student attends or not. If the student gets nothing, he should not attend. And if he's too lazy, I'm not in loco parentis.

Or they take any excuse.

> I will give incompletes if students miss exams. But if they come to me with excuses, I am ready to listen. I tend to be easy.

Another group (7) see the issue as out of their hands. The work of the course requires attendance, not the professor. Either the interaction in class makes attendance requisite:

> Small classes involve discussion so they need to be there.

or else the substantive material can only be imparted through the lectures:

> I do not care whether anybody comes, but [in my field] attendance is virtually compulsory or you cannot pass.

And the work of the course requires steady attention to the material, even if some exams can be missed without penalty.

> If students just miss [the tests] I do not give a makeup but recalculate the average without penalty. However, since they need the materials on the first exams to pass the later exams, they will still have to make up the work.

Pointing to the essential nature of attendance removes any onus from the individual requiring it as a narcissist or unreasonable person.

> The longer you are in this business, the more you get the sense that it is their job to get there. None of this voting with their feet. I don't have the sense that they are justified and you are not worthy if they don't appear. I tell students very clearly that they are to be in class [for] the skills they are there to learn. I have a good reputation with regard to internships and job placement. And I'm not recommending people I don't see.

This last position combines the idea of the work requiring student commitment with the sense of justification in imposing negative sanctions. And there are a few professors (4) who say they feel justified in brooking no relaxation of discipline; punishing derelicts as they can.

> People should attend unless they have a good excuse. In the lecture I can't control it, and if I worried about it, I would be obsessed. But in seminars I'm

> a bastard and I insist. I confront students and say: 'Why weren't you there?' And I do this to give them a sense that I don't accept. If there are late papers, I ask for an excuse from [the student health service]. I will not accept late work.

The most extreme stance is to permit no excuses whatsoever.

> I'm afraid I'm an old dinosaur. They either come in and take the exam or they take the course again the next quarter.

And the obvious way to convince students of the reality of standards -- and sanctions -- for class performance is to announce the rules clearly, as the following respondent does.

> I announce only one excuse [for missing exams]: the local hospital or dead. And no one misses.

But many informants (9) are ambivalent -- either about the importance of attendance or the limitations on excuses for late work or missed exams. Some say they don't take attendance, but nonetheless it will matter in marginal cases. Or they say that while some absence is condoned, excessive absence causes concern, and so they make an effort to discuss the problem with the student.

The most ambivalent in this category try to take a firm stand against lateness, absence, or missed exams, but actually take any excuse.

> Exam and paper deadlines ... are announced in the syllabus, and I expect that students will comply with deadlines or see me ahead of time unless they are in the hospital or some other clear case. Then I cave in when they come to see me. I cave in on all suggested excuses. I caved in for a wedding. A student wanted to take her exam early so that she could go to the wedding of a friend, not even a close friend. But I caved in.

And as one professor commented ruefully:

> I think attendance is very important, but I don't feel I carry the full courage of my convictions, partly because I was not an absolutely religious attender in my own time. Students rarely give excuses. The whole matter of attendance is like sex -- people are embarrassed to talk about. I'm astonished and impressed by the professors who make a fetish of attendance.

The range of response shown around the issue of how closely student performance should be monitored or controlled is also reflected in the range of opinions about dress and forms of address. There is no dress code, either for students or faculty. And faculty respondents are generally reluctant to state rigid or formal expectations for students. Three expressed the hope that students would be reasonably tidy, and two had hypothetical notions of what appearance would be offensive (gym

shorts, a bikini). But none had any expectations of controlling appearance, even as when, in the following professor's account, some dress (or undress) is offensive to them.

> I can remember a girl coming to school and putting her bare feet up on the desk in front of her. We don't see people coming in bare feet to class anymore. I really didn't like that.

In general, here as in other universities, professors seem to feel that student appearance should not be one of their concerns, that it falls within the area of individual right and taste. The tolerance of diversity in dress seems to be widespread on this campus. One professor related an anecdote about an academic official who had once sponsored a dressup week to promote more formal attire on campus. The faculty responded by appearing throughout the week in ragbag attire, dressed like bums.

One professor went beyond the idea of tolerance to praise diversity and idiosyncracy in dress.

> I want them to dress exactly as they wish. If I had my druthers, students could dress in the historical period that they wished. One could come as Lafayette, one as Plato in a toga, one in the middle age patterns with quadrants of green and red. The Victorian era dress would be most enjoyable. My idea of the optimum dress is backstage at the opera.

In terms of their own presentation, most professors were themselves formally attired (17 of those interviewed were in suits and ties for men, heels and hose and business dresses for women) all except one of the remainder were in what used to be called "dressy sport." Only one was in jeans and tee shirt during class hours. And a few of the majority (6) had an explicit policy, or philosophy governing that dress.

> I am representing my profession and I think of that when I dress.

Even when they thought it made them seem old-fashioned, some professors want to maintain formality in dress.

> I would never teach a class in informal dress. I always wear a tie and suit. That is related to my view of my responsibility. I try to look like a teacher. The kind of teacher they pay seven grand for. Of course that is counter to the trend and I am out of step.

And sometimes younger professors see formal attire as a way of maintaining social distance.

> I always wear a tie so they will know the difference between me and some of the taller seniors.

For others, formal attire suits their temperament.

> I have always been formally attired since I was two years old. I think it's fun to dress up.

Or else it is a matter of habit.

> I always wear a jacket and tie. It is an old Harvard habit that is ingrained.

Such standards suggest the "messages" conveyed by appearance (Stone, 1972) are available for interpretation by perceptive students.

While professors may set one standard of dress for themselves and allow students to set their own, professors do set the tone and style of formality in address. And students must be alert to the expectations of each professor. For there are at least four discernible patterns of interaction: 1) status distance with professor using informal and students using formal address; 2) informal address open to negotiation; 3) equal formal address; 4) equal informal address.

These patterns require sensitivity and discernment from <u>all</u> students, who must detect them. But the problems of detection may be particularly acute for the older student who will wonder whether to expect the forms of address accorded a peer-adult or the informality of first naming. If it is the latter, the first pattern of informal address may make older women uncomfortable, for they may find the familiarity of first names demeaning in a way younger students may not (Benjamin et al., forthcoming a and b). But it is clear from the following that such issues are far from the perception of faculty respondents. When they think about forms of address, faculty think about the youthful student, qualified only by some distinctions between graduate and undergraduate.

The patterns of interaction in address that respondents favor vary across a continuum of status distance from remote to egalitarian. Let us consider the most socially distant pattern first. Among those interviewed, nine (out of 21) favor (or acquiesce to) an unequal pattern maintaining status distance: The professor uses first names of students; students address the professor by a title (Mr., Mrs., Miss, Professor, or Dr.).

Sometimes the professor eases into the unequal relationship.

> I hope they call me Mr. It depends on how well I know them. In the early part of the quarter it is Mr. and Miss. Later on I may call them by first name.

These professors seem to feel status distance is <u>less</u> when the terms of address are unequal. Familiarity allows the professor to use first names; otherwise professors and students are equally formal in address.

> If I get acquainted I will normally call a student by first name. To my face they call me Professor.

Or professors find the students themselves wish to be addressed by their first names.

> I had traditionally called students Mr. and Miss. Over the years and through the '60s, I sensed they wanted to be called by their first names. And I asked them. I insist on being called Mr.

Another group of seven exhibit the second pattern. They are willing to leave the initiative in choosing a pattern of address to students.

These professors may be informal themselves.

> I call students by their first names when I can learn and remember them. I'm not fond of [large classes] where I can't call students by name. They can call me Professor or Doctor. Some call me [first name].

Or they may be open to negotiation in some settings but not in others.

> I call students by their first names, and I prefer Mr., though as a master of a residence college they call me by first name, which is fine. I'm happy to have students I know well call me by my first name, in fact I prefer it.

Generally, as in the view of both the foregoing and following responses, the most formal setting is the undergraduate classroom. In the foregoing it is formal and unequal. In the following view the class setting requires equal formality.

> I am called Mr. in class, and I call the students Mr. I am very formal and even graduate students that I ask to call me by my first name have trouble. I usually introduce myself to undergraduates in the lab [by my first name and last name] and they can pick it up as they wish. I am sort of flattered and pleased to have students call me by first name.

Generally, the division line is between graduate and undergraduate with more informal equality in address by graduates.

> I'm absolutely flexible. If I see that someone prefers to call me Professor or Doctor, that seems fine with me. If they wait for me to give them a cue, I let them call me whatever. If someone says, may I call you [first name]? I say yes. And I take it up and reciprocate. Different students prefer a different level of formality. Graduate students tend to call me [first name]. Most young undergraduates call me Professor, and a few call me Doctor. In general, I am as friendly as they want to be.

The third pattern is one which recognized the status differential between students and professors, seeking to minimize it through a careful formality. Seven respondents prefer these terms of address. Here is how one professor put his philosophy about terms of address.

> I am stuffy on these topics. I prefer to call them by their last name with Mr. or Mrs. or Miss in front of it. Students don't reciprocate on a first-name basis and equality calls for equal formality. I haven't found many students who were prepared to call me [nickname]. And I resented it when I was young and all the professors presumed to call me [nickname], though they were to be called by their last names.

Some in this group are not quite as certain as the professor in the foregoing quotation. They may not feel sure of student wishes about

informality.

> I usually call students by their last names. These are classes of about 25. I'm not sure I should call them by their first names. I guess they call me Professor or Doctor.

Or they may feel pushed by their perception of student wishes toward an informality they don't really like.

> I still believe in formal address though I realize it is a minority position.

Two professors mentioned modifying their formal style under pressure of student expectations.

> I prefer a slightly more formal basis if only because I think it is better for the academic situation. But I am open in that students are encouraged to speak freely, but not about personal matters. I prefer formal titles, but can't bring myself to do it [consistently]. I do call people Mr. and Mrs. in class but here in the office it is generally first names [though not reciprocated by students].

This professor maintains social distance, excluding the personal from discussion and continuing to appear sufficiently formal so as not to invite reciprocal, first name address from students. And so his ambivalence creates some of the difficulties for students, more or less explicitly recognized by other informants: The easy peer relationship suggested by reciprocal first name usage is not readily assumed by most young students, especially since many professors may, whether consciously or unconsciously, transmit conflicting messages about their desire to keep some distance.

The realities of status differentials between students and professors are generally recognized by those interviewed; only two professors were clearly in favor of a reciprocal first name basis for all situations. And even these two did not deny the difficulties of their position. One of these professors admitted some discomfort with the policy, although he found advantages outweighing disadvantages.

> I am always called by my first name. I think that it is because I was introduced [that way]. It makes me a bit uncomfortable because people come in whom I don't know, and call me by my first name. But I prefer that to Professor X... And I call them by their first names.

The other professor saw the limitations on the willingness of students to reciprocate first names but she still found the principle workable.

> I call students by first name, and I like to learn all of them ... even in classes up to sixty. I tell them they are free to call me [by my first name]. Some do. All the graduates do. Of late, there is a tendency for women students to use my first name more readily. And the older students do it more easily, the students who are closer to my age.

It is interesting to note that the only reference to older women in this discussion of forms of address comes from a woman professor. Perhaps the implicit messages that the male professors send out make it difficult for older women students to ask for attention. And the focus or interests of the male professors may make it harder for them to pay attention to the differences between older and younger women students. But here, as throughout this discussion of deference and demeanor -- and the prior discussions of ambience -- it is clear that students receive a wide variety of (sometimes conflicting) messages about how to respond to their professors. Even where professors are clear themselves on their own preferred patterns of interaction between student and faculty, they realize that a wider range of interactions occurs and is acceptable. In consequence, both students and professors must exert some caution in approaching -- and addressing -- one another. Levels of formality are often negotiable. From the remarks of these professors one may infer that students need considerable tact and sensitivity in adapting to the variety of preferences and ranges for negotiation they will encounter, just as they need tact in presenting themselves as bright students "who don't flinch from being treated as if they are equals" (emphasis added).

This appraisal of the varied situations and attitudes that students encounter is a reflection of the larger academic context. The professional autonomy which college professors enjoy -- particularly in elite institutions where their teaching loads are smaller and their perquisites (office space, leave time) are greater -- permits them to develop idiosyncratic views on how to conduct the academic enterprise, what expectations to hold up to students, what levels of scholarship and general demeanor to set as acceptable standards for students. The older student may be quite overwhelmed by the display of idiosyncratic behavior or the expression of idiosyncratic views. It is not surprising, then, that some professors find older students rigid or resistant to free and open expression of ideas; the students may be too frightened (or uneasy) to express themselves well (Daniels, et al., forthcoming).

Although there are certainly limits to expectation and idiosyncracy (Cavan, 1970), professors may easily adopt or develop a more individualistic approach to teaching and interacting with students than may members of the administrative staff who have the responsibility of implementing and interpreting University policies. In the next section we turn to a comparison of the perspectives of these two groups as they have consequences for traditionally and newly recruited students.

Comparison of Staff-Faculty Responses

The responses of those interviewed in this study give us some picture of the range of perspectives on the uses and functions of the University within which any segment of the student body can be accommodated. For both staff and faculty, wishes or notions of the ideal university or student are tempered by pragmatic notions about what is possible, given individual limitations, changing times, changing (and shrinking) markets. While faculty have somewhat more discretion, they, like staff, are limited by University policies and resources. Staff, however, see their roles as implementers of policy most clearly, and so all were inclined to distinguish between their preferences and official responsibilities than are faculty.

But both gatekeepers and professors, while performing different functions and stressing different aspects of University performance, share some common understandings. Recruitment and screening are tasks

gatekeepers perform with faculty perspectives in mind: The prospective student must succeed in the academic terms set by the faculty. Recruiters take responsibility and so are likely to be thoughtful about how to create the appropriate mix of students that faculty expect to fill classes. Gatekeepers and managers together take responsibility for recruiting and maintaining that population. And these persons are the ones who will be asked to make whatever adjustments or new plans are necessary should expectations change about the appropriate student body mix. In consequence, staff worry not only about how to obtain academically excellent students but also how to find them among women and minorities. What is required to encourage women and minorities in science, math, and engineering? And they worry about the support available through academic advising,

> All the black kids of that year [in one of the first cohorts to enter science and engineering] didn't make it. There were some problems in knowing how to advise people. For example, [one man] took calculus and flunked and then took it again the next quarter along with the next course in the sequence. That was poor advising, not recognizing the demands of the institution and the ability of the student. I find instances by reading transcripts ... I question the advising system ... It's done on a random basis, and you can't advise on a random basis [for] special problems. It is difficult for a professor in French to give advice to someone in a [science or engineering] program; such students don't need someone just to read the catalogue back to them -- they can do that themselves.

As we have seen, faculty take selection responsibility primarily for graduate students. Individual faculty members may work with special categories of undergraduates -- minorities or older women -- but only on an ad hoc basis without any formal policy. While staff are formally delegated, the concern with recruiting and supporting minorities, other categories of special or non-traditional students, as re-entry women, part-time, continuing education -- and any mixture of the three -- are not really covered. As with faculty, benign neglect is one alternative. The trickle of older students into the University, unlike the systematic search for minorities, is governed by no policy.

> Right now there is little attempt to recruit. It's benevolent neutrality as far as the admissions office is concerned. We are not doing too much of bending over backwards to give these people a chance ... If they were willing to go through the rigamarol and all the red tape they might be accepted. There would be some obstacles in the way. But if they got through them ... okay. I can remember [another gatekeeper] saying there will never be more than five or ten, so it's not going to matter.

Their lack of concern has kept these gatekeepers from making a systematic review of the record of achievement by these new students, and the small number of re-entry women who surmount all obstacles obscures the effect of the good academic record these women generally earn.

> I've seen nine apply; seven were admitted and are here now, full-time. All are successful. One is practically A, and they are all in the grade range B.

Despite a few student successes, as those discussed in the preceding remarks, the problems attendant upon success for this new population encourage a cautious and even pessimistic view. Only students with great ability or tremendous perseverence can make the grade. Even the praise for one who did make it, in the following quotation, carries the forbidding implicit message that only the extraordinary few will succeed. Such a message can be terribly daunting to the "average" bright student. Certainly no such message is transmitted to young, bright students.

> One gal ... had married and left many years ago. The major obstacle was foreign language requirements. I never dreamed she was going to do it. She took a full year at junior college and learned her first year of French, which she had forgotten from thirty years ago. She received no credit for that ... She came back here and met the requirement the following year. Very seldom do the older students attempt that language requirement. For all practical purposes it is not avoidable. [There is no remedial help on campus] unless advice is offered in an interview by a faculty person. Most of these students are very persistent and highly motivated, and nothing would get her down.

Most universities are reluctant to provide remedial courses in the regular program. And, as this is an elite university, it is not surprising that there is no policy for -- or interest in -- the development of remedial assistance here. In consequence, even where remedial math is necessary (as in preparation of some students for introductory calculus courses), the department teaches the course under a euphemism in order to avoid disapproval from the liberal arts college administration. As one professor said:

> Some in the department are upset because this is supposed to be a university and here we are having to teach high school level, but we have to do it.

Clearly, the number of students requiring help has something to do with the development of an ad hoc solution to a recurring remediation problem. And University policy about emphasizing other criteria for student admission than math or science preparedness may make this effort seem worthwhile. As the same informant remarked:

> Ten years ago everyone [who] came [into our department] took calculus. Now we have two sections of seventy students each in the fall that need pre-calculus. I presume they have some other redeeming qualities [to gain them admission to the University].

Some ad hoc policies do evolve as circumstances require, and the apparently deteriorating standards in science preparation are one set of problems managed in this way, as remedial courses are edged into the curriculum, without formal notice or acceptance of them. But it is not impossible to envision new plans or adaptations of existing policies, to manage a new set of problems and ease the path of a new group of students, like re-entry women, into the University. A pilot research

program at one university (Johns, 1979) suggests how admissions officers in charge of recruitment can widen their net in gathering an appropriate applicant pool. Not only high schools but also community organizations can provide candidates for higher education. At the same time that admissions officers learn how to recognize new types of applicants as appropriate entrants, entrants can be educated about the criteria underlying the expectations of gate keepers. Advertising for and recruitment of potential candidates through community associations and volunteer groups, publication of guidelines for potential applicants to review -- including the importance of test scores and suggestions on how to study for the nationwide examinations might remove some of the stumbling blocks women currently face. Efforts to minimize any current or remembered past biases against older students might include special panels, including former and currently enrolled re-entry women students, to review the folders of these applicants. Members of these panels might then interview candidates, answer questions, make recommendations to the admissions officer. Panels might also assist in evaluation of past credits for transfer students and those wishing to enter graduate school after a long educational hiatus following the bachelor's degree. In this way, admintrators' and faculty's lack of experience with this potential group of students can be mitigated by the information and advice gatekeepers gain from a peer group of the new re-entry student. This peer group has been socialized into the University system of values and understands the strengths and capabilities re-entry women will have to show in order to succeed there.

Special literature might also be prepared to offer women information about what schools and departments appear most welcoming or propitious, as indicated by the record of prior re-entry students (Maes, 1979, offers one example of a "how to do it" leaflet). While science, math, and engineering may be initially eliminated for those without continuing educational or work experience in these fields, education, humanities, and social science have offered more possibilities. Today, other professional schools -- particularly law, journalism, speech and communication -- hold some promise for re-entry women. And schools of business also suggest opportunity. The talents of the professional volunteer executive, for example, may be valued in a graduate business management program where criteria for the successful candidate may include, as one admissions officer put it, "a person who can get along with people, know how to implement plans, how to utilize good people and see talent, put it to work."

Advice to re-entry women would also include cautionary words on the difficulties of job placement after graduation. In business careers, for example, as an admissions officer remarked, "the placement question is a toughie." And this officer warned:

> We counsel older women ... because the firms are looking for entry-level people who will fit into a kind of mold ... The women who has been on the School Board and active in the community has been a manager but has never held a managerial job. What can she look for and who would hire her?

Such warnings reveal some of the problems in coordinating education and job market which may prove difficult to resolve. Gatekeepers and managers are not uniformly enthusiastic about expanding their work load. In a shrinking economy, career counseling and job placement are difficult enough with just the regular supply of graduates to service. If re-entry women do not use their own initiative, they may find little extra guidance available. The thought of new clients when services are already under strain is not appealing to some informants, who said "we are not promoting extra work." And one informant remarked, "We don't want our program advertised; we're not looking for business."

New categories of students who come to the University, then, need to know how to utilize existing resources to find employment and make their own way when established agency resources are slim. Women who have been active in the volunteer world, for example, may know how community organizations are connected to the business, professional, and corporate worlds. Such women may have as good a grasp on where job possibilities are likely to emerge as many employment counsellors. Again, the record of those who have been successful in the past points the way to those who follow. They will make their way through the University -- and beyond to careers and employment -- within the parameters set down by University personnel about those who can be serviced and taught in this academic setting. But students who are successful at creating job opportunities also show how the traditional forms of education can be put to unorthodox or previously unthought of career possibilities. In this sense, then, such students not only can expand their own horizons but those of University personnel as well. In doing so, they may also transform the notion of the ideal-typical student for a private, elite university to welcome without ambivalence.

Currently, as seen throughout the description of responses from gatekeepers and faculty, the notions of the ideal, the tolerable, and the unacceptable student, although not completely explicit, are part of underlying assumptions that are widely shared. The full-time, bright, academically qualified student in the 18 to 22 year-old age bracket is generally preferred by staff and professors. The "well-rounded" student that gatekeepers look for has parallels in the intellectual openness desired by professors. And both perceive an aggressive style as demonstrating intellectual commitment. The subjective evaluation of students as appealing, worth a chance, offering something to the general mix that gatekeepers sometimes speak of has its parallels in the endearing "menschlike" characteristics of some students that faculty admit liking whether they are specially talented academically or not. The superficial or uncommitted students that gatekeepers do not wish to admit have parallels among the shallow, cynical, uninterested students that professors deplore. Both staff and faculty are generally suspicious of part-time and continuing education students, doubting their commitment or ability. In sum, both staff and faculty want smart, lively students to come to the University. And they want students that somehow -- sometimes judged by intuition or subjective response -- add something to the general mix of students and to the comfort or interest or amusement of the individual professor.

The question is: how to find an egalitarian mix -- and maintain standards? For gatekeepers are not always certain how to judge new

kinds of credentials or profiles in order to determine likelihood of commitment, how to separate the inept and/or unscrupulous from the potential academic winners. And professors are not always certain how -- or whether -- to hearten the wavering, tutor those needing remedial help. The major issues are unresolved but are not likely to remain so, if only because of the economic pressures upon universities to expand their pool of applicants -- and change their marketing practices to do so. While lesser-known schools may hire "head hunters" to recruit potential students, the well-known private, elite colleges and universities can hope that the power and prestige of their names and the word-of-mouth advertising by alumni will continue to operate as drawing cards for the "best and brightest." But these schools, like all the rest, cannot avoid a continued "marketing" problem. As the pool of young people eligible for and committed to college education diminishes, schools with elite pretensions will have to dip lower in the group of applicants, taking students with interests and abilities that seem less well suited to the college in question than the students previously selected. Or else, the schools have to seek out new markets and "cream" off the best these new groups have to offer. Schools with a real financial need to increase enrollment, and schools with some commitment to community service and to the education of women have already been attracting bright re-entry women to their ranks. The more traditionally minded elite schools have been slower to follow this trend, ever conscious of their "traditions" and the necessity to maintain the value of their prized (and expensive) diplomas. The two-pronged fears -- that standards will be lowered to accommodate a new population of students; that the traditional pool of applicants will <u>think</u> standards are lowered and so begin to go elsewhere -- combine to engender resistance to change. In this expression of fear we can see how the liberal arts ideology of excellence and the marketing practices to convince consumers that "excellence is practiced here" become inextricably entwined. Those responsible for the marketing procedures, the gatekeepers and policy-makers in administration, see the issues most clearly. The professors are more likely to focus on the "product" they would like to create. The faculty seem indifferent to how scouts collect the material to be molded -- except for the indirect messages contained in general statements about University purpose, expectations, hopes. What faculty want are students who can be shaped in the professor's own image. In this way, teachers receive ego gratification or a sense of their own importance at offering directions to the next generation. But the question of how to fit older students into this sequence, how to show professors the possibility of "reproductions" their same age or even older, is not yet addressed.

Clearly, some general discussion of these issues will be required to focus the attention of gatekeepers and professors on the problem -- and the potential -- of new types of students. The analysis of issues and the discussion of ageism and sexism, with the same seriousness that is devoted to racism, can provide the opening wedge. Certainly workshops to discuss the issues and specialists appointed to develop guidelines would prove helpful to any university desirous of providing re-entry students with equal opportunity in the educational system. But the underlying issue -- whether re-entry students are a special group, privileged to be allowed to have an education and only desired if they make no special demands is not yet really out on the table for discussion.

As yet, it is not clear whether returning women are a group of students with rights to services relevant to their life circumstances as independent adults or if they must be treated, if only by default, as quasi-children still dependent upon their families.

The data presented in this report show that no clear position has yet been formulated at this University. The various opinions of those that play some part in fateful decisions for new kinds of students have been presented to show the array of doubts and fears, suggestions and alternatives, when considering the problem of adapting to the possibility of a changing student population at this elite university.

APPENDIX

Focussed Interview Schedule for Professors and Advisors to Continuing Education Students

I. Interviews with Professors

Something about Your Own Background

1. How long have you been teaching at this University?

2. How long have you been teaching? When and where did you take your degree?

3. What is your area of interest?

4. What is your particular interest in or commitment to that area? (Are you doing research in this area? Is it part of some earlier interest carried over from graduate student days? Other, what?)

Something about Your Views on Student Deportment

5. Views of class attendance (acceptable excuses for missing exams): athletics? illness? travel with husband? family events?

6. Preferences in forms of address: first names? parallel forms of address? titles? differences by sex or age?

7. Do you have dress preferences?

Views on Student Commitment

8. Preferences for career preparation? self-development? worries over dilettantism? narrow focus on grades?

9. Tell me, from your perspective, who are the problem students or slow learners or special students of any kind who require any special efforts from teachers to overcome their difficulties. (Probe for categories of students by race, geographical area, prior training.)

10. Tell me about any especially difficult or problematic students you have had in the recent past. What, if any, were common characteristics that they shared?

11. Tell me about any particularly good students or special students in the recent past. What, if any, were common characteristics? Describe them.

12. Do you remember any older or re-entry students in your classes within the past few years? If so, were any of them particularly able or memorable in any way? (Probe for older women as threat.)

13. What would you estimate as the proportion of women to men in your classes? Do you see women as serious about their careers as men? How well do you think the women do in comparison to men? What are your reasons for thinking this? Why do you think that this difference occurs?

Continue, if Applicable

II. Interviews with Professors in Departments with Continuing Education (or older women) Graduate Students

14. How much experience have you had on recruitment-admissions committees for graduate students?

15. What is your view of the admission procedures in your department in the past? What are their procedures now? Have they changed in any way in recent times?

16. What was the entering graduate class like the year before this? And this year? (Probe for sex and age of students.)(Probe for race.)

17. What is your view on students who are likely to become prize candidates?

18. Can you tell me anything about those students that you know from the past, particularly the recent past, who have been prize graduate students: What has happened to them in their careers?

19. How do you estimate the poorer candidates? What has happened to them in their careers?

20. How do you feel your department has done on graduate student placement particularly in the past five years? Can you give me some examples of where you have placed students from the recent classes? In your view of recruitment and selection of graduate students, what is the importance of the letters of reference presented by applicants? What do you look for in them?

21. How important is it, in your opinion, to see evidence of writing ability in publication or class papers submitted with applications?

22. How important are the GRE scores, in your opinion? What is your policy (or your department's policy) on rating these scores and reviewing applications? Do you happen to know anything about the GRE scores on the best applicants accepted and the scores of marginal applicants or the scores of students not accepted in recent years?

23. Do you ever check out student references and if so under what circumstances? Do you see any importance in followup on student references?

24. What is your overall estimate of departmental predictions and their success in the past few years? That is, have the students you thought would be good turned out to be the ones who actually performed well in graduate school? Are they the ones who then received good positions and performed well there?

25. Can you tell me anything about deviant cases: marginal students on entry who then did well or students entering with high expectations who then did poorly?

26. What is the general demographic pattern of your graduate student population this year? Does it differ from past years and if so, how does it? (Probe for male and female, old and young, racial distribution.)

27. Does your department have any particular cour seling facilities or socializing agencies -- other than formal classwork, tutorials, and thesis advising, for students with difficulties adjusting to graduate school? If so, what? Do you have any special formal or informal avenues for socializing students into their professional responsibilities? If so, what?

28. Do you see any differences in the relative ability of male and female students? Older and younger students? Racial differences? If so, what are they?

29. What are your views on part-time versus full-time student participation? Do you think that part-time graduate student participation is a workable scheme at this University? Whether or not it is workable here, what do you think of the notion of part-time graduate school in principle?

III. Interviews with Administrative Personnel

1. Something about your own work background.

2. What do you look for in judging whether or not someone looks like a suitable candidate for admission?

3. What makes you think a candidate is unsuitable?

4. What are your views on the feasibility of part-time or full-time students?

5. What do you see as the policy of the University toward the re-entry student and particularly the older woman? What has that policy been in the past?

6. How would you describe the changes, if any, in University policy over recent years?

7. What do you know about the University response to Title IX regulations? Do you have any experience or familiarity with the efforts of the University to meet the regulation requirements?

8. What do you see as special difficulties or troubles for the University should a significant number of older students wish to enter?

9. What has been your personal experience with older women applicants? What was the nature and outcome of the interaction?

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